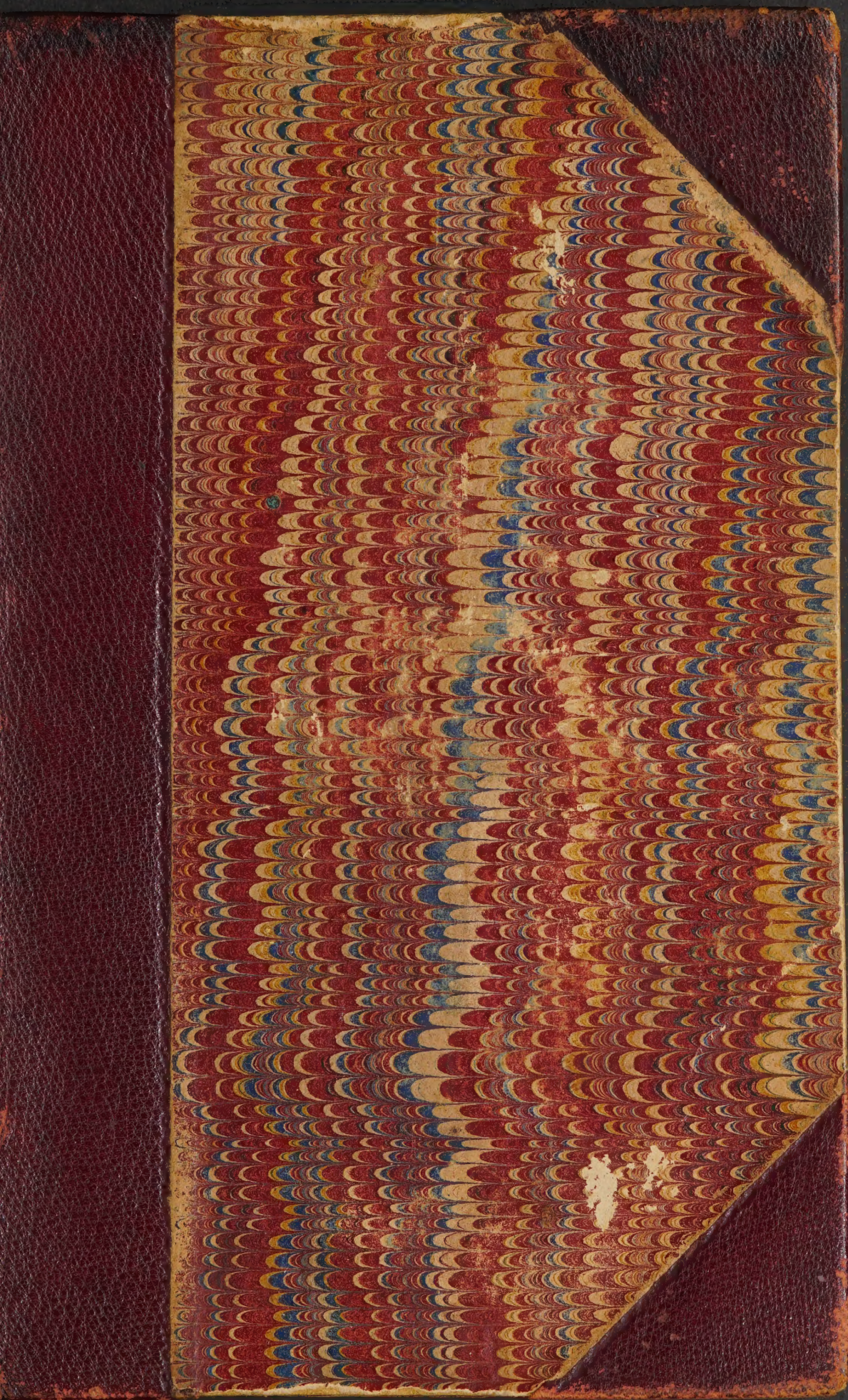


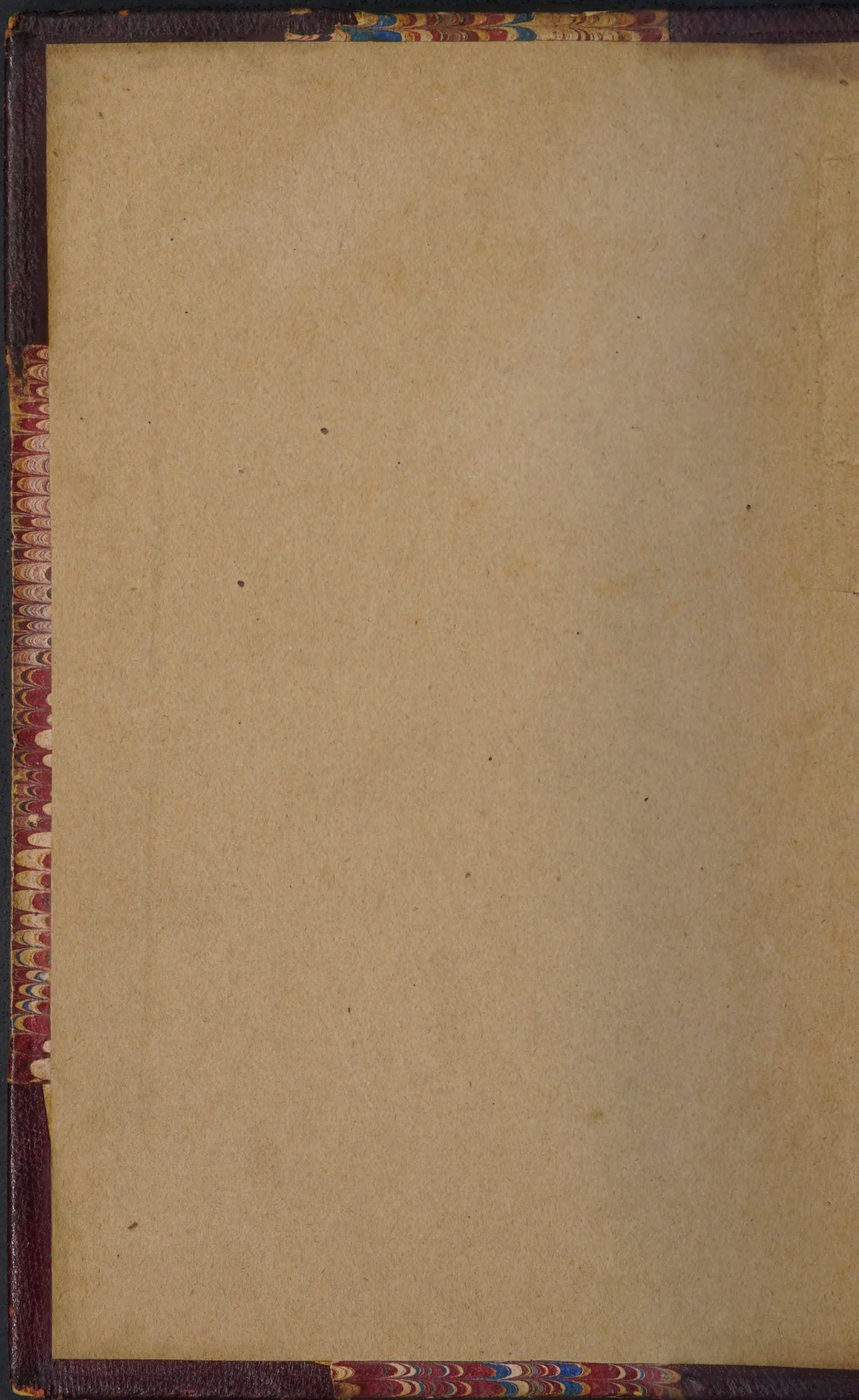


MATHIAS
ON
CHATTERTON











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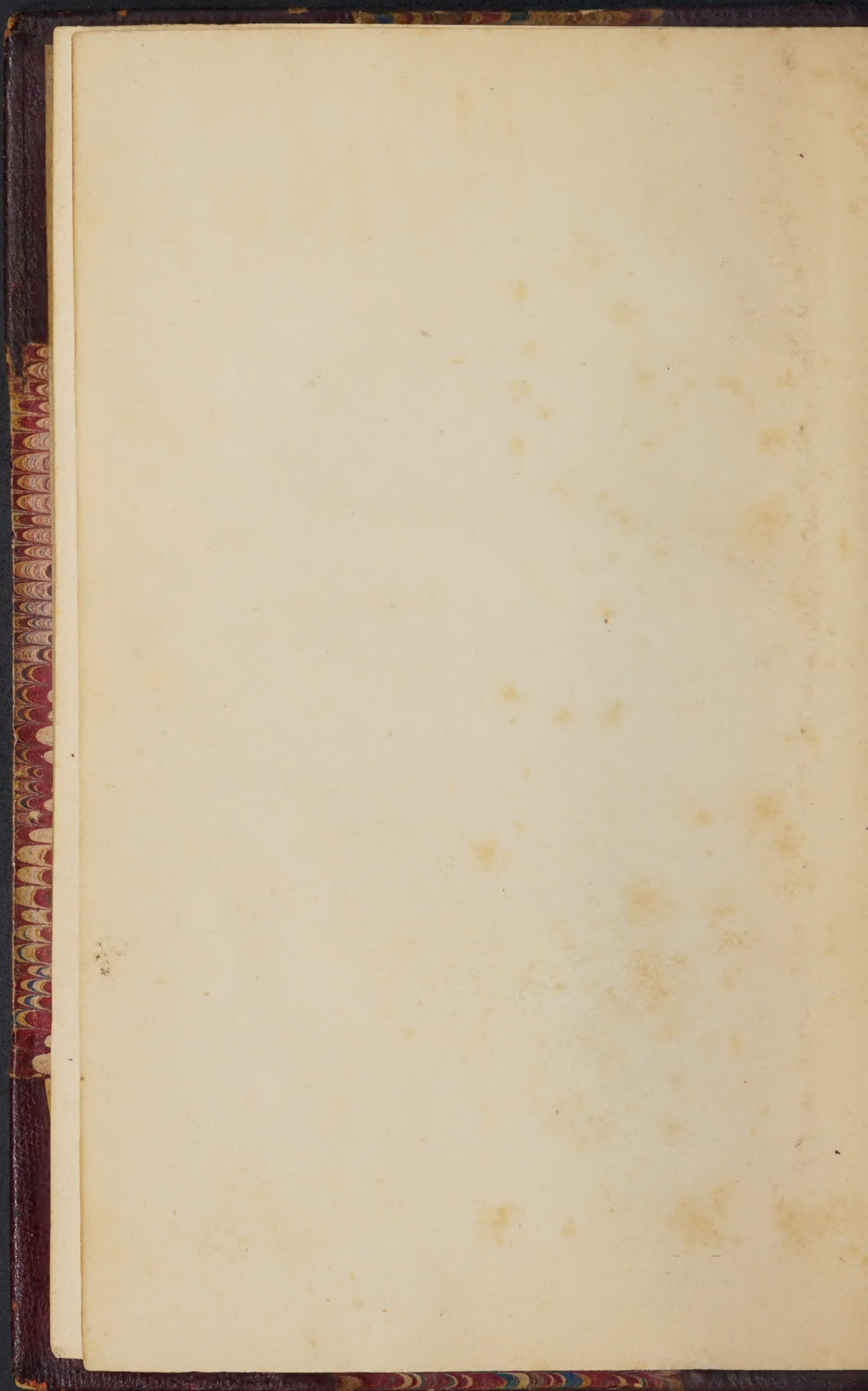
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2 titles

(1) Mathias

(2) Greene



A N
E S S A Y
ON THE
E V I D E N C E,
EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL,
RELATING TO THE
P O E M S
ATTRIBUTED TO
T H O M A S R O W L E Y.
CONTAINING
A G E N E R A L V I E W
OF THE
W H O L E C O N T R O V E R S Y.

Ego velim genuinum statum Controversiæ, ingenuè, ac
terminis minimè ambiguis proponi, & argumenta can-
didè ac solidè in utramque partem expendi, quod ani-
mum, non studio partium abreptum, sed veritatis
fincere studiosum requirit,

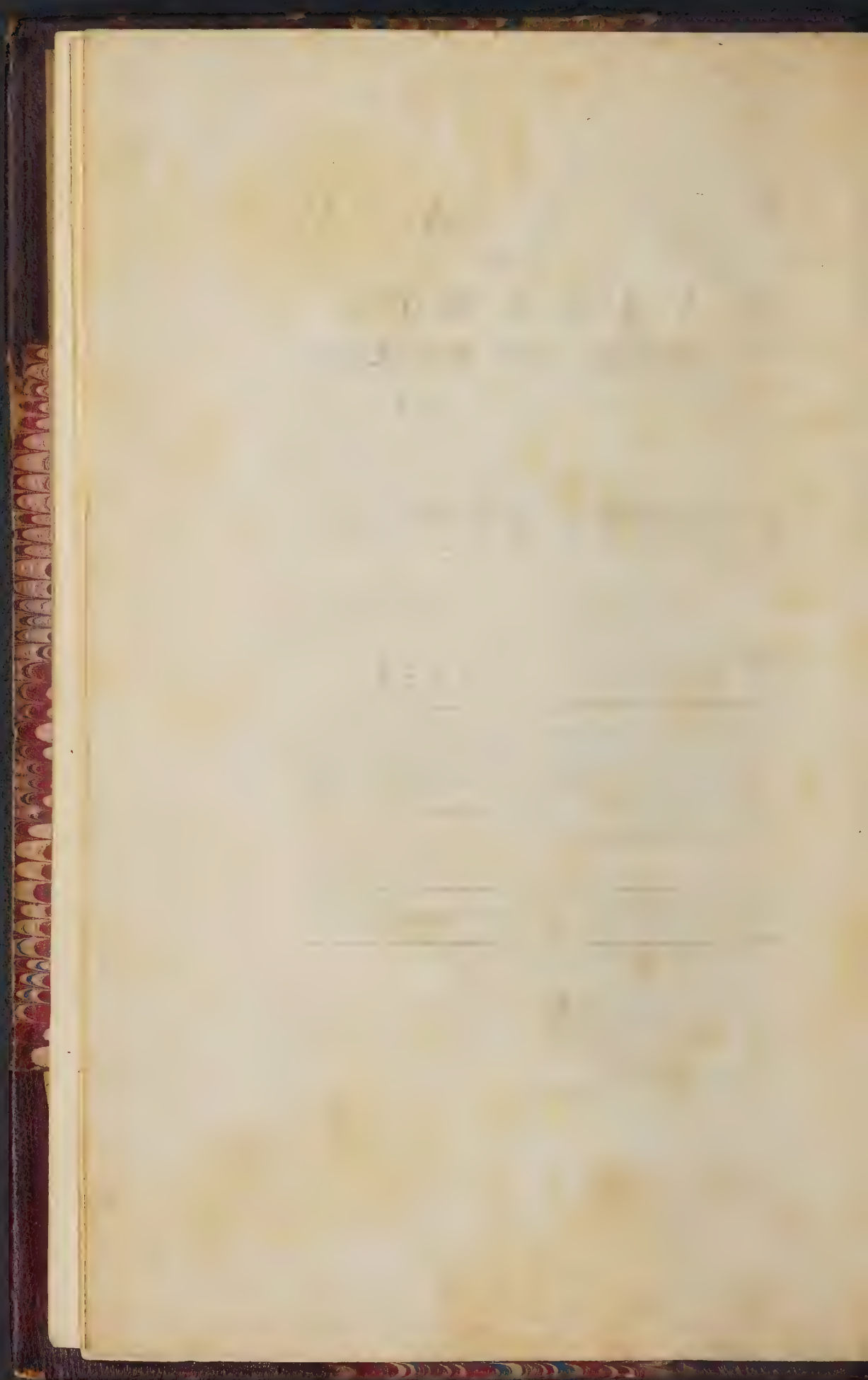
Limborch Epist. ad Locke.

BY THOMAS JAMES MATHIAS,

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, PALL-MALL, BOOK-
SELLER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE
OF WALES, AND THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES
THE PRINCES.

MDCCLXXXIII.



P R E F A C E.

HAVING employed much time and attention upon this very curious subject, and finding that the controversy became more and more perplexed, and the real state of it less understood; I endeavoured to arrange my thoughts in as distinct a manner as I could, and to set before myself the sum and substance of all that had been advanced. This I have done with the utmost fidelity in my power; and if by this Essay of mine any person should be enabled to view this question in a clearer light than he did before, I shall think my end completely answered, regardless of the opinion he
may

may form in consequence of it. I only request the favour of my Reader to peruse the following Sections in the order in which I have placed them.

As a List of the different publications which have hitherto appeared on this subject may possibly not be unacceptable to the Reader, I thought it could not be improper to subjoin it here ; but I decline giving any opinion on their respective merits.

The Reader is desired to correct the following *Errata*.

P. 8. l. 14. for *is*, read *are*.

P. 25. l. 20. for *centures*, read *centuries*.

P. 55. Note. for *LIFE*, read *GENIUS*.

P. 95. l. 15. for *anorwed*, read *aworwed*.

P. 105. Note. for *however which*, read *which however*.

A List of the various Publications upon
the Subject of ROWLEY's POEMS, *for*
and *against* their *Authenticity*.

EDITIONS OF ROWLEY.

POEMS, supposed to have been written
at Bristol by Thomas Rowley, and
others, in the Fifteenth Century ;
the greatest Part now first pub-
lished from the most authentic
Copies, with an engraved Specimen
of one of the MS. To which are
added, a Preface, an Introductory
Account of the several Pieces, and
a Glossary. Ed. 8vo. 1777.

N. B. This Edition has been reprinted.

DITTO: with a Commentary, in which
the Antiquity of them is considered
and defended, by JEREMIAH
MILLES, D. D. Dean of Exeter.
Ed. 4to. 1782.

THE EIGHTH Section of Mr. Warton's
Second Volume of the History of
English Poetry, with the Notes to it.

REMARKS on the Eighth Section of Mr.
Warton's Second Volume of the
History of English Poetry.

Payne, Mews-Gate.

Two Letters by the Hon. Mr. Horace
Walpole; printed at Strawberry-hill.
—Reprinted, (by his permission) in
the Gentleman's Magazines for
April, May, June, July, 1782.

APPENDIX, containing some Observa-
tions upon the Language of the
Poems attributed to Rowley, tend-
ing to prove, that they were written
not by any ancient Author, but
entirely by Thomas Chatterton.

Payne, Mews-Gate.

N. B. This Appendix is *now* generally
annexed to the 8vo. Edition of Rowley's
Poems.

OBSERVATIONS on the Poems attributed
to Rowley, tending to prove,
that they were really written by

Him and other Ancient Authors.
To which are added, Remarks on
the Appendix of the Editor (of the
8vo. Ed). of Rowley's Poems.

Bathurst, Fleet-street.

OBSERVATIONS upon the Poems of
Thomas Rowley; in which the
Authenticity of those Poems is
ascertained. By JACOB BRYANT,
Esq. *Payne, Mew's Gate, &c.*

CURSORY Observations on the Poems
attributed to Thomas Rowley, a
Priest in the fifteenth Century: with
some Remarks on the Commentaries
on these Poems by the Reverend
Dr. Jeremiah Milles, Dean of Exe-
ter, and Jacob Bryant, Esq;
Nichols and Walter, Charing-cross.

AN ENQUIRY into the Authenticity of
the Poems attributed to Thomas
Rowley, in which the Arguments
of the Dean of Exeter and Mr.
Bryant, are examined. By THO-
MAS WARTON Fellow of Trinity
College, Oxford, and F. S. A.
Dodsley, Pall-Mall.

STRICTURES upon a Pamphlet entitled,
“ Curfory Observations on the
Poems attributed to Rowley, a
Priest in the Fifteenth Centry.”
With a Postscript on Mr. THOMAS
WARTON’S ENQUIRY into the
same Subject. By E. B. Greene,
Esq. *Stockdale, Piccadilly.*

A VINDICATION of the APPENDIX to
the Poems called Rowley’s : In
Reply to the Answers of the Dean
of Exeter, Jacob Bryant, Esq. and
a third anonymous Writer ; with
some further observations upon those
Poems, and an Examination of the
Evidence which has been produced
in Support of their Authenticity.
By THOMAS TYRWHITT.

Payne, Mew’s Gate.

To which may be added various shorter
Compositions on the Subject (too nume-
rous to specify) inserted in the different
monthly Magazines.

SECTION I.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

Rem universam tribuere in partes; ambigua primum videre, deinde distinguere; postremo habere regulam, qua vera & falsa judicarentur, & quæ quibus positæ essent, quæque non essent, consequentia.

CICER. DE CLAR. ORAT. Sect. 41.

CONTENTS OF SECTION FIRST.

Introduction—Motive for composing the
Essay—Nature of Controversies—Different
Kind of Evidence and Proof on different
Subjects—Substance of the Account given by
Mrs. Chatterton and Mrs. Newton—Mr.
Smith—Mr. Carey—Mr. Clayfield—Mr.
Catcott—Mr. Capell—Mr. Rudhall—Mr.
Thistlethwaite—Thoughts on considering
Subjects of this or the like kind, as relating
to Literature in general.

A N

E S S A Y, &c.

S E C T I O N I.

THE Poems, attributed to Thomas Rowley, have in a peculiar manner, attracted the attention of the learned and the curious. But their several Enquiries have terminated in such opposite opinions, that many have been induced to think, that no point of rest can be found, and that the whole matter must for ever fluctuate in vague conjecture and unsatisfactory investigation.

It is therefore with considerable diffidence, that I engage in what may seem

an unnecessary or an impracticable business.

For whatever the abilities of ingenious men, whatever the sagacity of critics, whatever the erudition of scholars, could devise or produce, has been poured fourth in a large and abundant stream.

The fountains of the great deep of knowledge have been broken up ; they have watered the schools of Academics, and the habitations of men of more general conversation with the world. It is not with a thought that I can add many things absolutely new, to surprise or enchain the attention, that I deliver my sentiments on this subject : I rather wish to collect the scattered doctrines, to represent their united virtue, and to place them, according to my ability, in
a man-

a manner best adapted to display their efficacy.

It is with no small degree of surprise mixed with concern, that I contemplate men of great abilities and learning forming conclusions diametrically opposite from the same principles. The nature of the human mind confounds me every step I take: so true is the observation of the elegant fabulist,

Sua cuique est animi cogitatio,
Colorque proprius.

For whoever considers the names of those who have viewed the arguments arising from the *internal evidence* which these poems contain, will have reason to abate somewhat of confident assertion and peremptory decision,

But when the merits of the cause are weighed with impartiality ; when argument is opposed to argument, and au-
B 3
thority

thority to authority; I cannot but be of
 opinion, that the thinking part of such
 gentlemen as are interested in the fate
 of this controversy, must inevitably al-
 low, that if *external* evidence can be
 obtained, that, and that alone, can seem
 capable of deciding the dispute. This,
 at least, can hardly be perverted. For
 since all mere internal arguments are
 derived from the reason and speculation
 of some inquisitive minds, they will un-
 doubtedly be controverted and examined
 by the reason and ingenuity of others
 who have equal pretensions to be heard;
 it is in vain therefore to expect univer-
 sal acquiescence in matters of this na-
 ture. As to the Poems, they are before
 us: of their existence there is no doubt.
 How they were brought to light is a
 matter of fact; and a matter of fact
 must be established by legitimate and
 competent testimony. Here we have
 no recourse to Saxon antiquity, or to the
 erudi-

erudition of other times : *So it is*, is the sum of all that can be advanced.

If the validity of the witnesses can be questioned, or their intentions proved to be dishonest; if they had any peculiar purpose or interest to serve, which prevented them from giving plain answers to plain questions; if all or any of these disqualifications are found to take place in regard to the matter before us, let whatever they have advanced be esteemed as null and void. But as all of them, as far as I have heard, are persons of integrity, and some of abilities; and as the principal parts of their evidence were delivered before the parties on either side had risen to a considerable height, and when it was even dubious whether the substance of it would ever be laid before the public; I see no reason why their evidence should not be admitted without hesitation.

As

As we stand oftener in need of being reminded than of being informed, I beg leave to recall a few common thoughts to the reader's attention previous to the consideration of the subject at large. I am by no means fond of controversy, and have often lamented the disagreeable effects of it, which have extended much farther than the parties ever designed or conceived. But then we should also remember, that there are topics of universal interest, in which the safety and well being of mankind is concerned. These must and ought to be discussed with that zealous ardour which subjects like these demand.

But the animosity and heat of any contest is not always in proportion to its magnitude or importance. If indeed the spirit of Milton rose to overwhelm, with an acrimonious resistless torrent of eloquence and argument, the feeble defender of Charles; we have also
seen

seen the asperity and the vehemence of a Scaliger or a Bentley, when the rectifying of a comma or the substitution of a particle was the important principle of the debate.

In the proposed question, whether the Poems of Rowley are authentic or not, I cannot conceive that the fate of nations is involved, or the honour of any individual vitally touched. The parties really concerned are now out of the reach of human applause or censure. They have left behind them their works, as toys with which mortals may rationally amuse themselves, and consider according to their respective capacities. Yet in this and in all other subjects, I look upon Truth as one uncompounded substance, the contemplation of which is the highest gratification the human mind can enjoy.

But

But no rational enquirer expects the same kind of evidence in every subject. The mathematician glories that incontrovertible science is his pursuit, and stands on a basis which cannot be shaken. The natural Philosopher is convinced of the certainty of the conclusions he makes, when drawn from his own experiments, yet scruples not to admit the testimony of credible men for the truth of many others, which it is impossible or inconvenient for him to repeat himself, and on which he builds other equally important conclusions. We cannot stir a single step in any of the ways of knowledge without relying on our fellow creatures for information. It is through their medium that we receive the greatest and most interesting truths. So just is the observation of a great writer; " There is no science
 " taught without original belief; there
 " are no letters learnt without faith;
 " there is no justice executed, no com-
 merce

“ merce maintained, no business profe-
 “ cuted without this. All secular af-
 “ fairs are transacted, all great achieve-
 “ ments are attempted, all hopes, de-
 “ sires, and inclinations are preserved
 “ by this human faith grounded on the
 “ testimony of man.”

Knowledge indeed admits of various
 degrees, from the full blaze of certainty
 to the dimmest twilight of probability.
 An understanding well-cultivated and
 disposed to the reception of truth, gives
 to every argument its proper weight in
 the balance. Some propositions it can-
 not admit without doing violence to the
 principles of reasoning, and the nature
 of evidence; to others it yields, though
 with some reluctance, should they be
 found to counteract a favourite precon-
 ceived opinion. But if naked truth be
 the object, either in a trivial or an im-
 portant affair, an ingenuous mind will
 give that degree of attention to it which
 is

is necessary for the discovery. I mention this, as the present Question is of little moment to the world at large; but if it deserves any investigation at all, it deserves such an one, as may enable an enquirer to form his own judgment upon it, to feature forth distinctly his own conceptions, and institute a just comparison of such evidence, as the nature of the subject will permit, wherever it may tend.

As these Poems came to light by means of THOMAS CHATTERTON, either as author or copier, (for I deem it *impossible* to argue on any other ground) the best method which can be pursued, is, first, to give the history of this young man, *so far as relates to the poems*, without descending to foreign minutiae. This I am enabled to collect from the various accounts given by those who were personally acquainted with him, or connected by the ties of blood. This will
com-

comprehend the whole of the *External Evidence*. It is my design in the Second Part, to comprize all the *principal* arguments of *Internal Evidence* which have been urged by the advocates of either opinion. Lastly, from a combination of the circumstances, I mean to propose such a conclusion as shall seem to me most accordant to the principles of just reasoning, and the nature of evidence.

Circumstances, however trifling, receive a kind of dignity foreign to themselves, when united with a subject about which public curiosity is excited. I hope therefore, to be excused the mentioning some circumstances otherwise unworthy of being recorded. This part of my essay is not susceptible of ornament; simple narration, freed from perplexity, is all that we can in justice require.

THOMAS

THOMAS CHATTERTON was born on the 20th of November, 1752, in the City of Bristol. At the age of five years he was put to a little school; but his faculties being remarkably dull, his master could not make him comprehend the letters of the alphabet, and advised his mother to remove him, which she accordingly did. On his return home, his mother endeavoured to instruct him herself, and her labours were at last attended with success. She taught him his letters from an old French manuscript on vellum, the subject of which was music; and afterwards, when he had made some progress, he read to her in an ancient Testament in Gothic Characters. These early circumstances gave him a taste for antiquity.

About the age of eight years, Chatterton was sent to Coulston's charity school, in which nothing whatsoever was taught but reading English, writing, and
 accompts.

accounpts. He continued here between six and seven years. It is to be observed, that he was in school under the immediate inspection of the Master from seven o'clock till twelve in the morning; and from one till five in the evening, in summer time; and in winter from eight till twelve, and again from one o'clock till four. He was in bed all the year round at eight o'clock in the evening. The rules of the school never permitted him to be absent but on Saturdays and Saints-days; and then only from between one and two o'clock 'till between seven and eight in the evening. On the very day he left Coulston's school he was articulated to Mr. Lambert, an attorney. He was fourteen years of age the 20th of November, and bound apprentice the 1st of July following.

As Mr. Lambert's business was not very extensive, Chatterton was seldom employed above two hours in the day
with

with official concerns. He rose early in the morning, and went late to rest at night; but was never absent from Mr. Lambert's house later than ten o'clock; but once, during the whole time of his residence there. He used to pay a visit to his mother and sister generally from eight to nine every evening. About the time of his being bound to Mr. Lambert, he discovered accidentally some of the manuscripts in question, with which his father had covered twenty bibles, forty copy-books, and Clark's History of the Bible, in quarto. He questioned his mother about them, and she told him from whence they originally came, and where he would find the remainder, viz. in a large deal box belonging to his father. Upon this information he immediately went to the box which his mother had pointed out, and removed the manuscripts from thence into a square oak one of a smaller size. He said he had discovered a treasure, and was perpetually

petually talking about Rowley. From time to time he used to fill his pockets with these manuscripts which he carried to the office. He then went himself to the room over the north porch of Redclift Church where he found some few more. In the evenings he used very often to read the poems, which he said were the compositions of Rowley, aloud to his mother and sister; and after them, it was his custom to entertain them with *his own*, which were chiefly of a satirical nature. These latter made them rather uneasy, as they were apprehensive that such writings would be productive of disagreeable consequences to himself. From that time he constantly kept to Rowley.

His sister remembers to have seen the original parchment of a poem on our Lady's Church, and, as she thinks, of the Battle of Hastings also in the same manner. His sister not understanding

C

the

the old terms, as he read them, he was frequently very angry with her; particularly when he was reading the Battle of Hastings. She remembers hearing her brother talk very frequently of the names of Turgot and John Stow, besides that of Rowley. He never transcribed any poem at his mother's house, but all at Mr. Lambert's office. His sister remembers having once called upon him at Mr. Lambert's, and finding him with an old parchment crumpled at the edges and green with age.

As to books, Chatterton's father had about one hundred and fifty, which were sold at his death to a Mr. Long. As to every book of every kind to which it was possible for him, in his situation, to have had recourse, they must be searched for, either at Green's and Shircliff's circulating libraries, or at Messrs. Barret's, Catcott, and Clayfield. This is the substance of the genuine
volun-

voluntary information which was received from Mrs. CHATTERTON his mother, and Mrs. NEWTON his sister.

Chatterton had a few particular friends to whom he was peculiarly attached and unfolded the secrets of his heart. Among these was a Mr. SMITH. Mr. Smith is of opinion, that Chatterton knew nothing of these manuscripts till he went to Mr. Lambert's, which was when between fourteen and fifteen years of age. He used to read to Mr. Smith, sometimes parts, and sometimes whole treatises from pieces of ancient manuscripts which were upon vellum. He remembers to have seen above a dozen of them. Some of them were as broad as the bottom of a large-sized chair, and had upon them the heads of popes or kings. He has seen Chatterton frequently transcribing them at Lambert's, and remembers that he used to read to him what he had just transcribed. Mr.

Smith confesses that he had no taste for these old compositions, and that Chatterton has often told him that he knew nothing of them till he went to Mr. Lambert's. That he had them from an old box belonging to his father, who procured them from a place in Redclift Church. Chatterton moreover told him, that the first discovery he made of their value, was occasioned by his observing his mother's thread-papers which were of old parchment. The uncommon hand-writing and strange words struck him much, and upon his questioning his mother, she informed him where he might find the remainder of them, in the box mentioned above.

Mr. Smith says, he recollects well, that Chatterton would often walk with him in Redclift Meadows, and converse with him on these ancient manuscripts. Sometimes his heart would seem to burn within him; and then pointing to the
Church

Church (in viewing which he always took a particular delight) he would, with a glow of enthusiasm on his countenance, tell him a variety of curious particulars relating to it. Look there, would he say, that steeple was once burnt down by lightning ! This was the place where they formerly used to act Plays. While he was speaking this, he held a parchment in his hand; but whether he read from it or not, Mr. Smith does not remember. Chatterton always mentioned these manuscripts as being all ancient ones; whether all as Rowley's, Mr. Smith cannot say, though he remembers no other poet's name but his. Chatterton never at any time talked of them as his own compositions; nor ever gave the least hint of such an idea. Mr. Smith means all such poems as he gave to Mr. Catcott and Mr Barret, as ancient ones. Whatever he presented to Mr. Smith or any other friend as his own, or whatever he

pub-

published in magazines, &c. with his own signature, were undoubtedly such; Mr. Smith observed that he needed not to borrow from any man. His genius he said, was universal, and nothing but inspiration could fathom all the young man knew. Mr. Smith adds, he never mentioned any design to him of publishing these ancient manuscripts, nor does he remember that Chatterton ever found any more of them in the room over the north porch of Redclift Church.

As to Chatterton's learning, Mr. Smith says, he is certain that the young man had no knowledge whatever of Greek and Latin. That he had once a design of teaching himself the Latin tongue; but that he (Mr. Smith) dissuaded him from the attempt, and recommended the French, as it might prove of more service to him hereafter. Mr. Smith observed, that he wished he had known the value of these manuscripts as he
might

might have had them, had he expressed the least desire. It was through him he said, that Mr Barret and Mr. Catcott became possessed of what they now have, and concluded with repeating, that he might have had any of them for a word's asking: but at that time he had no taste for such compositions.

Chatterton had another friend who was called his *second self*, Mr CAREY. He has written a letter to Mr. Catcott on this subject. The substance of it is; that he very frequently heard Chatterton mention that Rowley's writings *and other* manuscripts were in his possession soon after he left Coulston's school, and went to Mr. Lambert's. That Chatterton had given some of them to Mr. Catcott and Mr. Barret; that he does not recollect Chatterton had ever *shewn* them to him (Mr. Carey) as he had no taste whatsoever for old poetry; but that Chatterton had mentioned these manuscripts

scripts to him at an age when he was utterly incapable of having written them, and wonders how any man can be induced to believe it. Mr. Carey says, he was acquainted with Chatterton from his infancy, and was witness to the progress of his genius; and is of opinion, that his powers were by no means equal to the production of Rowley's poems, particularly at the age when he brought them to light; and concludes with observing, that he himself is convinced of their authenticity.

It has been supposed that Mr. CLAYFIELD of Bristol furnished Chatterton with books. Mr. Clayfield, upon being asked, said he had indeed a small library; but does not recollect that he ever lent Chatterton above two books, which were, Martin's philological grammar, and that volume of Martin's philosophy to which a copy of verses is prefixed. Mr. Clayfield is of opinion that Chatterton

ton was of too volatile a turn to read much. He recollects Chatterton's talking to him of the ancient poems in question, though not often; but that he used to read to him passages from Milton and Thompson, though he was principally fond of his own poems, which turned chiefly on satirical subjects, for which species of writing he had a peculiar talent. Mr. Clayfield said, that from the knowledge he had of the young man, he believed the poems of Rowley, to be no more the compositions of Chatterton than his own.

Mr. CATCOTT's account, as given in the preface to the octavo edition of Rowley, is as follows. " The first discovery of certain manuscripts having been deposited in Redcliff Church, above three centuries ago, was made in the year 1768, at the time of opening the new bridge at Bristol; and was owing to a publication in
Farley's

“ Farley’s weekly Journal, 1st October
 “ 1768, containing, *an account of the*
 “ *ceremonies used at opening the Bridge,*
 “ taken, as was said, from a very anci-
 “ ent manuscript. This excited the
 “ curiosity of some persons to inquire
 “ after the original. The Printer, Mr.
 “ Farley, could give no account of it,
 “ or of the person who brought the
 “ copy; but after much inquiry it was
 “ discovered to have been brought by a
 “ youth of between fifteen and sixteen
 “ years of age whose name was Thomas
 “ Chatterton, and whose family had been
 “ sextons of Redcliff Church for near one
 “ hundred and fifty years. His father,
 “ who was now dead, had also been master
 “ of the Free-school in Pile-street. The
 “ young man was at first very unwilling
 “ to discover from whence he had the
 “ original; but after many promises
 “ made to him, he was at last prevailed
 “ on to acknowledge that he had recei-
 “ ved this, *together with many other*
 “ manu-

“ *manuscripts*, from his father, who had
 “ found them in a large chest in an upper
 “ room over the chapel on the north
 “ side of Redclift Church.”

Soon after this, Chatterton was introduced to Mr. Catcott, and *then* gave him the Bristowe Tragedy, and Rowley's Epitaph on Canynge's grandfather. In two or three days after, he brought also to Mr. Catcott the Yellow Roll, and the song to Ælla in the original manuscript, which Mr. Catcott immediately carried to Mr. Barret, and introduced the boy to him. Mr. Barret was at that time writing the history of Bristol. The song to Ælla was written like prose without any breaks or divisions into verses. Mr. Catcott remembers that Chatterton had at that time the mark of the school-tonsure on his head, and was turned of fifteen years of age. He also recollects that Chatterton then mentioned the names of most of the
 poems

poems which have since appeared. In 1769 he brought to Mr Catcott the tragical enterlude of *Ælla* in his own hand-writing in folio, with the epistle, letter and introduction; upon which Mr. Catcott wrote, "Chatterton's Transcript 1769." Mr. Catcott is certain, that the young man understood neither Greek nor Latin; and yet Mr. Catcott could produce sentences in both these languages from manuscripts given him by Chatterton. This is a short abstract of this gentleman's account, to whose zeal and attention the public is principally indebted for this collection of poems.

In the introductory account to the poems of Rowley, octavo edition, the editor informs us that sometime after Chatterton had brought the first part of the *Battle of Hastings* to Mr. Barret, that gentleman prest him to produce any part of this poem in the original hand-writing, and that at last he said, that he

wrote

wrote this poem himself for a friend ; but that he had another, the copy of an original by Rowley, and being then desired to produce that other poem, he, after a considerable interval of time, brought to Mr. Barret the poem marked No. 2. as far as v. 520 inclusive, with the following title ; “ *Battle of Hastings by Turgotus, translated by Rowly for W. Canynge Esq.*” The lines from v. 521 inclusive, were brought sometime after in consequence of Mr. Barret’s repeated solicitations for the conclusion of the poem.

I may add, that Chatterton once borrowed Skinner’s Etymologicum of Mr. Barret, but returned it in a few days, because most of the interpretations were in Latin, which he did not understand. He did the same by a small Saxon dictionary which had in like manner been lent to him ; and which he returned on the same account.

Mr.

Mr. CAPEL, a Jeweller at Bristol, was acquainted with Chatterton, and has often called in at Mr. Lambert's office when he was writing, and at times has seen him copying old manuscripts. As he never conceived, that they would prove hereafter of so great a value, he had no particular inducement to make any curious enquiry about them; nor will he take upon him to determine whether they were of parchment, or not. He remembers very well, that they lay in heaps and in great confusion, and appeared to be rumpled and stained. Near them were the papers upon which Chatterton had been transcribing; he says that Chatterton always spoke of these manuscripts as ancient writings, and told him *that he was then studying to understand the old language in which they were written.*

In Mr. T. Warton's enquiry into the authenticity of Rowley's poems, I find the following account of a transaction between Mr. Rudhall and Chatterton,
stated

stated in a letter from Mr. H. Crofts to Mr. Steevens. I have copied it verbatim; the left hand column containing Dr. Milles's words, and the right hand one Mr. Croft's remarks upon them.

“ A *singular* circumstance relating to the history of this ceremony (“of passing the old bridge”) *has been communicated to the public within these two last years*; and candour requires that it should not pass unnoticed here, especially as the character of the relator leaves no room for suspicion. The objectors to the authenticity of these poems may possibly

tri-

“ The circumstance is singular and I have always thought so; but it has never yet, I believe, been *communicated to the public*; though I certainly meant it should some time or other.

It

triumph in the discovery of a fact, which contains, in their opinion, a decisive proof that Chatterton was the author of this paper, and (as they would infer) of all the poetry which he produced under Rowley's name; but *when the circumstances are attentively examined*, the reader will probably find that even this fact tends rather to establish, than to invalidate, the authenticity of the poems.

Mr. John Rudhall,
a native and inhabitant

It is not clear to me, that the advocates for Chatterton have occasion to be apprehensive, *if the circumstances should be attentively examined* even according to the Dean's own shewing. But mine is somewhat different.

My

tant of Bristol, and formerly apprentice to Mr. Francis Gresly, an apothecary in that city, was well acquainted with Chatterton, whilst he was apprentice to Mr. Lambert.

During that time, Chatterton frequently called upon him at his master's house, and, *soon after he had printed this account of the Bridge in the Bristol paper, told Mr. Ruddall, that he was the author of it; but it occurring to him afterwards, that he might be called upon to produce the original,*

My visit to Bristol of a few days, in order to collect information concerning Chatterton, was on the 23d July, 1778. At that time I gave something to the mother and sister for their voluntary communications to me. After I published LOVE AND MADNESS, I laid a larger plan for their benefit, which I hope still to see carried into execution; and I destined something more to the family

D ly

nal, he brought to him one day a piece of parchment, about the size of a half sheet of fool's cap paper; Mr. Ruddall does not think that any thing was written on it when produced by Chatterton, but he saw him write several words, if not lines, in a character which Mr. Ruddall did not understand, which he says was totally unlike English, and, as he apprehended, was meant by Chatterton to imitate or represent the original from which this account was printed. He cannot determine precisely how

ly of him whose genius, I so much respected, though I well knew his family deemed me their enemy, for endeavouring to prove him guilty of Forgery. Prevented from going to Bath, and consequently from giving what I had set apart for this purpose, with my own hands, I gladly seized the liberty allowed me by a friend of Mr. Ruddall to beg this favour of him. On the 22d of March, 1781, I

how much Chatterton wrote in this manner, but says, that the time he spent in that visit did not exceed three quarters of an hour; the size of the parchment however, (even supposing it to be filled with writing) will in some measure ascertain the quantity which it contained.

I wrote to Mr. Rudhall, to whom I was then a perfect stranger, making use of his friends name, and enclosing a draught to him or his order for ten pounds, requesting he would give the money to Chatterton's mother and sister. On the 30th of the same month Mr. Rudhall called upon me in Lincoln's-inn; appeared, as I imagined, to lean to the side of this question which I have ever thought

thought to be the right: and told me of his own accord, what certainly agrees no more with the Dean's account, than what I have already related agrees with the Dean's saying, that Mr. Ruddall told this, *in 1779, on the prospect of procuring a gratuity of ten pounds for Chatterton's mother, from a gentleman who came to Bristol in order to collect information concerning the son's history.*

He

He says also, that when Chatterton had written on the parchment, he held it over the candle, to give it the appearance of antiquity, which changed the colour of the ink, and made the parchment appear black and a little contracted: he never saw him make any similar attempt, nor was the parchment produced afterwards by Chatterton to him, or (as far as he knows) to any other person. From a perfect knowledge of Chatterton's abilities, he thinks him to have been incapable of writing the Battle of

If my memory not only fails me now, but failed me the same day, and has failed me ever since, Mr. Rudall will correct me. To him I appeal, and by him I must submit to be corrected. But on the 30th of March 1781, he told me, AS I THINK, that he assisted Chatterton in disguising SEVERAL pieces of parchment with the appearances of age, just before "the Account of passing the Bridge" appeared

of Hastings, or any of those poems produced by him under the name of Rowley, nor does he remember that Chatterton ever mentioned Rowley's poems to him, either as original or the contrary ;

but sometimes (though very rarely) intimated that he was possessed of some valuable literary productions. Mr. Rudall had promised Chatterton not to reveal this secret, and he scrupulously kept his word till the year 1779 ; but,

ON THE PROSPECT
OF PROCURING A

GRA-

in Farley's Journal; that after they had made several experiments, Chatterton said, "this will do," now I will black

THE parchment : that whether he told him at the time what

THE parchment was he could not remember ; that he believed he did not see Chatterton black THE parchment, but that Chatterton told him, after the "Account of passing the Bridge" had appeared in the News - paper, that THE parchment which he had blacked and disguised, af-

ter

GRATUITY OF TEN POUNDS FOR CHAT-
TERTON'S MOTHER
FROM A GENTLE-
MAN WHO CAME TO
BRISTOL IN ORDER
TO COLLECT INFOR-
MATION CONCERN-
ING HER SON'S HIS-
TORY, he thought
so material a benefit
to the family would
fully justify him for
divulging a secret
by which no person
now living could be
a sufferer.*

*ter their experi-
ments, was what
he had sent to the
printer containing
the Account.**

* N O T E.

Having laid this account before the Rea-
der *verbatim* as I find it in Mr. WARTON'S
ENQUIRY, I think it my duty to mention,
as I wish to conceal nothing, that in re-
gard to what Mr. Croft has stated *from*
memory,

The Reverend Dr. Milles, in his edition of Rowley's Poems, p. 454. has presented

N O T E.

memory, I have been informed, and upon the most unquestionable authority, that there is a letter of Mr. Ruddall's extant on this very subject, written to a friend of his. In this he perseveres in his first assertion, that he *never* saw Chatterton attempt this mode of giving what he conceived to be the appearance of antiquity *to more than one piece of parchment*. However, admitting the utmost that has been advanced, I beg leave to add a few remarks on the occasion, as some have thought this transaction of great consequence.

If Mr. Ruddall actually saw Chatterton write on parchment and hold it over a candle, to give it the appearance of antiquity; I do not see who can or ought to pretend to dispute a plain fact. But granting Mr. R. actually saw him take even *several pieces of parchment*, and give them what he conceived to be the appearance of antiquity; I would ask, What were the subjects of these

presented us with a letter from Mr. THISTLE-
THWAITE,

N O T E.

these parchments? Were they of poetry, or in prose? Did they bear any resemblance to those actually in Mr. Barret's hands? Were they similar to any of real antiquity? Did they pass for ancient ones with any person? or Were they ever seen by any one whatsoever, but Mr. Ruddall? Nothing is specified but "the Account of the ceremonies at opening the Bridge," and that too after it had been published in the Bristol Journal; and Mr. Ruddall confesses he knew nothing of the subjects of the parchments, even allowing there to have been SEVERAL pieces of parchment, according to Mr. Croft's account from memory. The very appearances produced by Chatterton's holding the parchment over the candle, namely, *the contraction of the parchment*, and the *change of the colour of the ink*, are not judged to be discriminating marks of antiquity by those who are conversant in those subjects: and finally, I would ask, *Is it possible* to produce the genuine appearance of antiquity in any piece of
parch-

THWAITE, which contains many curious
and

N O T E.

parchment, by holding it over a candle in
any manner whatsoever.

A complete list of the original parchments,
which were given to Mr. Barret by Chatter-
ton, and which he has now in his hands,
was communicated by that gentleman to Dr.
Milles, and is as follows:

Milles's Rowley, page 438.

The Song to Ella, with the challenge to
Lydgate and the Answer. This poem was
sent by Mr. Barret to a friend, and is un-
fortunately lost.

Canynge's Feast, a Poem.

The first thirty-six lines of the Storie of
William Canynge.

The following are Historical Prose Compositions.

- I. The Yellow Roll, containing an account
of the origin of coinage in England,
and

and interesting particulars. The substance

N O T E.

and of the curiosities in Canynge's cabinet. This also was lent with the song to Ella, by Mr. Barret to a friend, and is lost.

2. The purple Roll, thirteen inches by ten, containing an Account of particular Coins, and the second and third Sections of Turgotus's History of Bristol. N. B. The first Section above quoted is also extant in Chatterton's own hand, but the original does not appear.
3. Vita Burtoni, a parchment roll, about eight inches long, and four broad, very closely written; containing an account of Sir Simon de Burton, and his rebuilding Redclift church.
4. Knights Templars Church; a History of its foundation, &c.
5. St. Mary's Church of the Port; a History of it from its foundation, ending with the verses on Robert Canynge.
6. Roll of Bartholomew's Priory, with a List of the Priors.

7. An

stance of it, as far as I conceive, amounts to this :

Mr.

N O T E.

7. An Account of the Chapel and House of Calendars; a drawing of the chapel, and underneath an explanation of it.
8. Ella's Chapple. No drawing, except of the Kist of Ella, but there is an account of its foundation.
9. St. Mary Magdalen's Chapel. A drawing only.
10. Grey Friars Church. A drawing only.
11. Drawing of three monumental Inscriptions.
12. Ancient Monument and Rudhall: mere delineations.
13. Lesser and Greater St. John's: only a rude delineation.
14. Several Drawings of the Castle of Bristol
15. Strong Hold of the Castle: a drawing, and account of its foundation, by Robert Earl of Gloucester, and Site thereof.
16. Old Wall of Bristol; mere drawings.
17. Carve of Robert Curthoses Mynde in Castle freed: a drawing or figure, with the words *Carne*, &c. underneath.

Mr. THISTLETHWAITE informs us, that by means of his intimacy with a Mr. THOMAS PHILIPS, sometime an assistant master in Coulston's Charity-school in Bristol, he formed a connection with Chatterton then on the foundation there, about the end of the year 1763. Mr. Thistlethwaite thinks that Chatterton did not pen a single couplet during the first three years of his acquaintance with him, nor had he at that time formed any exalted idea of the boy's abilities.

In the summer of the year 1764 Chatterton informed Mr. Thistlethwaite, that he was in possession of certain old manuscripts which had been found deposited in a chest in Redcliff Church, and that he had lent one or two of them to Mr. Philips before-mentioned. Mr. Philips, (who was of a poetical turn himself) a few days after shewed one of them on parchment or vellum to Mr. Thistlethwaite, who is confident that it was the poem entituled *Elenoure and Juga*,
after.

afterwards published in the Town and Country Magazine for 1769. Mr. Thistlethwaite says, the parchment or vellum appeared to have been closely pared round the margin, for what purpose, or by what accident, he knows not; but the words were entire and unmutilated. As the writing was yellow and pale, as Mr. Thistlethwaite conceives, by age, Mr. Philips had with his pen traced and gone over several of the lines, which, as well as Mr. Thistlethwaite's recollection serves, were written in the manner of prose, without any regard to punctuation. Yet nevertheless, they could not make out the full meaning and scope of the whole, from their ignorance of the characters, manners, language and orthography of the age in which the lines were written.

In the course of the year 1768, in divers visits that Mr. Thistlethwaite made to Chatterton, (while he was at Mr. Lam-

Lambert's) he found him employed in copying Rowley, from what he then considered, and does still consider, as undoubted originals. He is of opinion, that Chatterton received assistance in explaining the old terms, from the glossary to Chaucer; and he thinks he once saw him with Skinner's *Etymologicon Linguae Anglicanae*. Mr. Thistlethwaite perfectly remembers to have read several stanzas copied from the *Deathe of Sir Charles Bawdin*, the original of which then lay before him; but, that he thinks the language, as he then saw it, was much more obsolete than in the present editions of that beautiful poem.

Mr. Thistlethwaite observes, that when Chatterton was asked for the originals of those pieces, (since published in Chatterton's *Miscellanies*, such as the imitations of *Offian*, &c.) he hesitated not to confess, that they were merely
the

the offspring and invention of his own fancy. But whenever he was questioned as to the authenticity of the poems attributed to Rowley, his declaration was invariably and uniformly in support of their antiquity and the reputation of their author Rowley.

Mr. Thistlethwaite thinks, that had Chatterton been the author of the poems attributed to Rowley, so far from secreting such a circumstance, he would have made it his first and his greatest pride: as all who were acquainted with him will readily admit, that vanity and an inordinate thirst after praise eminently distinguished his character. Mr. Thistlethwaite is of opinion, that the immorality of Chatterton's life has been aggravated far beyond the truth: but whatever be the state of the case in this point, the zeal of Mr. Thistlethwaite's regard for the memory of his friend, deserves our approbation or our excuse.

For

For my own part, I am inclined to fear that the end of this unfortunate, ingenious and much-lamented youth, was of that dreadful kind, to which the scenes of unnatural Atheism and immature debauchery have an almost necessary tendency. His spirit was impatient of controul, conscious of undeserved and unaccountable neglect; till at last, pride, melancholy and scepticism wrought upon his powers, and having done their perfect work, hurried him into the grave, without a fear and without a hope.

THIS is the State of such Evidence as has been procured, relative to Rowley's Poems, which I have endeavoured to place in a clear point of view. I have purposely avoided entering into a discussion of the minutiae of Chatterton's life, his adventuring turn among booksellers and political pamphlet-writers, with other trifles, which I deem either foreign to the investigation, or serving only to embarrass

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and bewilder our thoughts, when directed to the particular object.

I think what has been advanced indisputably proves the existence of many of the parchments in question, and of the contents of some of them. Had they consisted of plain prose narrations, or merely of such events as had not hitherto come to light; had they treated of anecdotes, armorial bearings, ancient records or similar points of antiquity, I much doubt whether any question would have been raised of their authenticity. But what a different object is presented to our contemplation! we behold a poetical fabric, perfect in all its parts, rising from an abyss of darkness and obscurity, whose foundation is solid, and whose superstructure is elegant. It seems as if the Spirit of Poetry had chosen it for his secret residence.

Men,

Men, like Mr. de Voltaire, may indeed smile at contending Commentators, and may talk with some degree of pleasantry of what that lively writer calls, *The Spirit of Charity between two Chinese Interpreters* *.

But to reason is one thing, and to joke is another. Let each possess its

* The passage I allude to is the following, taken from the exordium of a little treatise which Voltaire, for reasons best known to himself, chose to entitle, *La Defence de mon Oncle*; the sentence contains a just and good-humoured satire on the rage of system when pursued without judgement, but falls impotent from the shield opposed to it by real learning. “ Quand Monsieur Guignes fit
 “ descendre les Chinoises des Egyptiens,
 “ quand il prétendit que l’Empereur de la
 “ la Chine Xu étoit visiblement le Roi d’E-
 “ gypte Ménes, en changeant *nes* en *u*, & *mé*
 “ en *y* (quoique Ménes ne soit pas un nom
 “ Egyptien mais Grec) mon Oncle alors

proper department, and truth has at all times defied the power of ridicule. The difficulties attending this question are, doubtless, very great : nor can they even be understood in their full extent, without much patient examination. Yet when we consider the nature and complexion of our understandings, and how wonderfully they vary ; that what is proof with one, appears only in the light of conjecture with another ; we should not be too hasty in drawing our conclusions. Neither names, nor party, nor authority, nor prejudice, nor conjecture, should influence such minds as deem the enquiry interesting. In every concern, an honest mind is bound thus to act : to propose his doubts for doubts, and his opinions for opinions.

“ se permit une petite raillerie innocente,
 “ laquelle d'ailleurs ne devait point affaiblir
 “ *l'esprit de charité entre deux Interpretes Chinois.*
 “ Car au fond mon Oncle estimait fort Mon-
 “ sieur Guignes.” *Si sic omnia.*

If

If any person considers this question as a matter of mere amusement, and not of any serious importance, he says no more of it than may, with equal justice, be affirmed of *every other* mere literary subject. Yet even in this point of view it deserves no common regard. It is a national subject, and administers many an interesting topic to our discussion in the antiquities of our own language, manners and customs. I would further suggest, as a general apology; that we and all of our fellow-creatures stand in such frequent need of relaxation from more serious concerns, that he who can increase the stock of harmless pleasure, and furnish out an intellectual feast, from the depths of literature, the recesses of harmony, the power of the pencil, or the creation of poetry, is a member of society more intrinsically useful and respectable, than we may at first imagine.

Employment and exercise are necessary for every Being. There is an energy, an active principle in the human mind, which must operate visibly or in secret, and have its peculiar object. Unfortunately for us, the nature of that object too often becomes indifferent when once the passions are suffered to interfere. It is not then the subject, but the affections; not the end proposed, but the pleasure of contention. Any thing will serve; the struggles for forms of government, the subtleties of Theology or Metaphysics, the *Homo-ousion* and the *Homoi-ousion*, the Sleep of the Soul, Space and Time, the Epistles of Phalaris or the Poems of Rowley, may be, and are fully sufficient to display the internal nature of man, and feelingly persuade him what he is.

Perhaps indeed every subject, which requires a train of argument, in some measure promotes the end of our being; and by informing the understanding, has

a tendency to correct the heart. If we impartially consider that all the accumulated volumes of sound reasoning and just criticism never yet formed, possibly never assisted, a POET ; that all the institutions of eloquence never yet conferred the gift of speech, or taught an ORATOR to wield at will the passions of man ; we may be inclined to question what speculations can prove of any real utility. Yet no one who discourses with propriety on the drama or the epic or similar * points, is deemed wholly an useless writer : it is always of some importance to reduce under the rules of legitimate reasoning those subjects which seem abandoned to the caprice of taste. Why then should these enquiries into the Poems attributed to

* It is impossible for a lover of Poetry, in its genuine sense and character, to forget THE ESSAY ON THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF POPE," which must always be read with singular entertainment and instruction.

Rowley be regarded as frivolous, when we consider the various topics they may necessarily introduce, or the pleasing speculations into which they may lead an inquisitive mind?

SECTION II.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

Disputantium fervor & partium studium rebus per se clavis nubem & caliginem obducunt, *dum undique conquisitis laqueis alter alterum irretire & absurdis involvere conatur*. Si autem tu meæ, vel ego tuæ opinioni assentior, perinde est Veritatem quærentibus, dummodo illius potior habeatur sententia, quæ verior, & in eâ consentiamus.

LOCKE Epist. ad Limborch.

C O N T E N T S

O F

SECTION THE SECOND.

Diversity of Judgment in all matters of Taste, in particular of Poetry; and in a peculiar manner of such Poetry, as that now in dispute.—Arguments AGAINST *the Authenticity* of the Poems attributed to Rowley, under the following Heads. 1. Style, Composition and Sentiment. 2. Metre. 3. Ancient Language. 4. Historical Allusions and the Learning contained in the Poems. 5. Comparison of Chatterton's own Poems with those attributed to Rowley.—Arguments FOR *their Authenticity* under the same Heads.

ESSAY, &c.

SECTION II.

IN almost every Controversy, which is submitted either to judicial decision, or to the arbitration of taste, men are disposed to view the arguments offered in support of a particular opinion in different lights, whence necessarily arises a diversity of judgment. But the human mind is too often accustomed, either from impatience of delay, or from want of proper skill, or more commonly from inattention and idleness, to give a hasty assent or dissent to subjects and propositions, even where clear demonstrative proofs and certain knowledge may, if sought after with diligence, be obtained.

As

As to Literature, the various modes of our pursuits, and the particular cast which our minds may have received from accidental circumstances, render it an absurdity to expect an uniformity of opinion.

In Poetry this is peculiarly remarkable: but if we would for a moment consider what criterion each man sets up for himself, the wonder would cease. If the composition is such, as interests the passions and applies to the feelings of the heart, the general voice of mankind will acknowledge its excellence. But if it proposes to elevate the fancy by the power of fiction and the sublimity of imagery, it is vain for an author to hope for approbation but from the intelligent.

I mention Poetry, as among all the arts and inventions of men, which ennoble or embellish life, there is no one which, under some of its diversified forms,

forms, has more strongly attracted the notice of every rank and understanding. Whatever is uncommon in this art, naturally excites curiosity, and calls forth the erudition and sagacity of critics. In the learned languages much time has been expended and abilities exercised in settling the text of the ancient bards, and displaying their beauties and defects. But, now since *almost all* that human abilities can perform has been exhausted in restoring these valuable remains of genuine composition to their original perfection and purity, the learned of our own nation have with great propriety turned their industry to the illustration of those authors,* whose names have made the name of England famous, wherever the influence of literature is felt throughout the world. It is now no longer a satire on us that we have neglected our national authors, and all the

* Among these may be mentioned, the edition of Shakspeare by Johnson and Steevens;

charms and excellencies of our own language.

It cannot therefore be a matter of surprise, that the publication of the Poems attributed to Rowley should have founded an alarm amongst us, and roused the active speculations of every votary to antiquity, science and poetry. We already know the various success with which this contest has been carried on, and the respectable names which have been engaged in it. The books which have been composed on this subject are numerous, of great learning and ingenuity; but those of the highest estimation are perhaps of a bulk rather too formidable and replete with erudition too abstruse, to attract general atten-

tion; Mr. Warton's History of English Poetry; Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, by Mr. Tyrwhitt; Beaumont and Fletcher by Mr. Colman; and the Relics of Ancient Poetry by Dr. Percy.

tion.

tion. It is therefore my intention in this place to deliver with the utmost fidelity, accuracy and conciseness in my power, *the principal Arguments of Internal Evidence*, which have been urged FOR and AGAINST the authenticity of the Poems in question. I shall give them divested of the illustrations they have received, as the various topics introduced would require volumes to discuss them; and as they have already been treated in those books to which the curious reader may easily have recourse.

THOSE who maintain that the Poems attributed to Rowley, are the production of the eighteenth and not of the fifteenth century, and that they were composed by Thomas Chatterton, support their opinion by the following arguments. They contend, in regard to,

STYLE,

STILE, COMPOSITION and SENTIMENT :

That, these Poems exhibit such a perfection in all the different departments of good composition, as must have been the result of a long establishment of the arts and habits of writing; and *that* the stanzas have such a brilliancy as did not appear in our poetry till the middle of the present century. *That*, our old English poets are minute and particular, do not deal in abstraction and general exhibition, but dwell on realities. *That*, even in the narrative or descriptive, the writer of these Poems adopts ideal terms and artificial modes of telling a fact, and too frequently falls into metaphor, metaphysical imagery, and incidental personification. *That*, his propensity to personification is indulged to a great extent, and some of his allegorical personages are delineated on too large a scale for the simplicity of a remote period, and are often superior to those of

Sackville

Sackville and Spenser. *That*, There is no regular tragedy in the English language extant, printed prior to that entitled *Gorboduc*. *That*, Superiority of genius never yet produced a perfect model in the infancy of composition. *That* Poetry, like other sciences, has its gradual accessions and improvements, is influenced by the condition of society, assumes accidental and arbitrary forms, and is subject to new and peculiar modifications. *That*, A continued tenour of disparity, not so much in the stile as in the sentiment, is a striking characteristic of the old English poetry, and that the bad predominates. *That*, Our ancient poets abound in unnatural conceptions, strange imaginations, capricious extravagancies, and even in the most ridiculous inconsistencies, which are not discoverable in these poems. *That*, They abound with modern words and modern formularies of expression, even with whole lines and paragraphs not to be distinguished from

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the compositions of the present day; and, *That*, the Transcriber has modernized so much of the ancient verses, (if ever there were any) as to leave very little of the original.

As to METRE, they are of opinion; *That*, The stanza of the old English poets is most commonly formed of lines of equal feet, with an uniform recurrence of the same systematic alternation of rhyme; but that in these poems we sometimes find that devious and irregular measure called the Pindaric, which was never known till Cowley's time. *That*, The stanza in which *Ælla*, *Godwin*, the *Tournament* and other poems in this collection are written, consists of ten lines constructed of two quatrains rhyming alternately, and closing with an Alexandrine, of which we have no specimen in *Chaucer*, or *Lydgate*, or *Gower*, and that neither of them ever close with an Alexandrine. *That*, *Spenser* first extended

tended the old octave stanza to nine verses, closing with the Alexandrine, to which Prior afterwards added a tenth line, preserving the Alexandrine close; which last poet they conceive to have been the model to the author of the poems in question, in this particular. *That*, The truth of accent, or legitimacy of cadence which uniformly marks the termination of the lines, and which prevails in these poems, is far superior to that of all the supposed Rowley's cotemporaries. *That*, There are no polysyllabic terminations of the verse with which our ancient poets abound; and lastly, *That*, the rythmical harmony is totally different from theirs.

As to ANCIENT LANGUAGE, they think; *That*, The ancient language of these poems is affected and unnatural, and that antiquated expressions are engrafted on the present modes of speech. *That*, The diction and versification are

at perpetual variance, as the author is sometimes as smooth and mellifluous as Dryden and Pope, and yet more obscure and inexplicable than Gower or Chaucer. *That*, The author of these poems appears to have borrowed his language from glossaries and etymological English lexicons, and not from life and practice: *That*, we observe in these poems a factitious ancient diction, at once obsolete and heterogeneous, anomalous in every respect, such as could never have been in use at any æra of antiquity; such as is not transmitted by any ancient English author; and part of which most certainly would have been almost as little understood three centuries ago as at present.

As to HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS, and the LEARNING contained in the Poems, they apprehend; *That*, These are by no means of so recondite a nature as many have maintained; but that Chatterton might have
been

been supplied with such information from books by no means uncommon, such as Hollingshed, Fox, Fuller's Church History, and others of a similar nature. *That*, Deep learning has been mistaken for general reading. *That*, In these poems there is no Gothic learning, such as the the pedantry of a priest in the fifteenth century could have exhibited; no allusions to the classics of the dark ages, as Aristotle, Boethius, the Fathers, &c. whereas our ancient writers are perpetually shewing their small stock of learning by quotation in season and out of season. *That*, Though these poems abound with beautiful sentences and illustrations of morality, yet there is no *Religion* in them, that is, no prolix devotional episodes which mark the poetry of Rowley's age. *That*, They are not interspersed with texts of scripture, and addresses to the saints and the Holy Virgin, but to such allegorical divinities as truth, content and others of Pagan original.

That, There are no allusions to old romances, such as the achievements of chivalry, Arthur's round table, Sir Tristram or Charlemagne with his twelve peers, which were the favourite and eternal topics of allusion in this period. *That*, The Greek language was either not taught, or not cultivated in England in Edward the Fourth's reign, and that it would be difficult to prove that the supposed Rowley could have seen the Iliad of Homer, either in the original or in a prose translation, and yet it is conceived that the author of these poems had no inconsiderable knowledge of Homer's works. *That*, If such a poet as Rowley had really existed, he could not have been neglected or forgotten for so long a time, and that some cotemporary writer would have taken notice of him; and finally, that the supposition that such a collection of poems should subsist only in one copy, and that too unseen,

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unknown, nor ever once transcribed for so long a period, is incredible.

As to THE COMPARISON OF CHATTERTON'S OWN POEMS WITH THOSE ATTRIBUTED TO ROWLEY, they think; *That*, The boasted inequality of the former is by no means to be allowed. *That*, If there is an inequality, yet the same hand appears in both; and this inequality is easy to be accounted for, as Chatterton lavished all his powers, when in a state of ease and unembarrassed in his circumstances, on the counterfeit Rowley, but that his Miscellanies were the offspring of Indigence, Inconvenience and Distraction.

THE Advocates FOR *The Authenticity* of the Poems attributed to Rowley, argue to the following effect :

As to STYLE, COMPOSITION and SENTIMENT, they conceive; *That*, Though these poems

poems certainly exhibit such an uniformity of excellence, as is rarely, or rather never to be found in the works now extant written in the fifteenth century; yet, when we compare any composition with another of the same or a prior age, the difference subsisting is not always a difference resulting from time, but often from situation, taste and judgment. *That*, A perfect model may be produced even in the infancy of composition, as such an instance is actually to be found in the literary annals of the most learned nation that ever existed. *That*, Though we may have no regular English tragedy extant, printed prior to *Gorboduc*, yet it does not therefore follow, that no one ever was written, though from peculiar circumstances it might never have been published. *That*, Even allowing all the absurdities, inconsistencies, disparities, and every other defect in our ancient English authors, which
have

have been so forcibly displayed and urged, yet, that perfect taste and judgment, the habits of discrimination, of selection and rejection, are the result of long experience in the art of writing; and that such taste and judgment is exhibited in these poems, as it is impossible could have been attained by a youth of Chatterton's age, situation and circumstances, or by any young man whatsoever, at so early a period of life. *That,* It is by no means probable that Chatterton made such great and frequent alterations, as entirely to have changed the substance of the poems, or the formation of the verse, but that what he did, proceeded from a necessity of supplying what was deficient, or from conjecture when the words were not sufficiently legible in the ancient manuscript.

As to METRE, they are of opinion;
That, In all languages the modes and
 measures of verse were originally in-
 vented

vented and adopted from accidental circumstances, and according to the various taste of the various authors of eminence in succeeding periods. *That*, Some measures, from a conceived propriety in them, though wholly arbitrary, have been assigned to great and lofty subjects, such as the heroic and the dramatic, and others again to inferior subjects, such as the elegiac and pastoral. *That*, Very early in the English Poetry, there are instances of a great variety of measures used by authors, some prior to, and others cotemporary with the supposed Rowley, such measures as the octave stanza formed from the Ottava Rima of the Italians, the seven-lined stanza, or Rithm Royal, the deca-syllabic and octo-syllabic couplet, and the stanza of ten lines used by Chaucer in one of his smaller poems. *That*, It is by no means improbable, that Rowley might have introduced the Alexandrine verse at the
close

close of the stanza, though he was not the inventor of that species of verse, which was used by Pierce Plowman in his visions. *That*, The poly-syllabic close of the verse, and the falling of the rhyme on the penultima or ante-penultima syllable is not so very common among our ancient authors as has been asserted. *That*, Though the uniformity of the rhyme in Rowley's verse and the continuance of the harmonic cadence are certainly superior to the productions of his age; yet, that our ancient poets furnish abundant instances of modern cadences and harmonious lines, though thinly scattered in proportion to the bulk of their writings: which circumstance however demonstrates what may be called a *capability* in our language at a very early period. *That*, In all the annals of the Poetry of all modern nations, the English, Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese, there is absolutely no such composition extant as a
Tragedy

Tragedy written throughout in any one of the various stanzas above-mentioned, supported regularly and without intermission, (save in the Introduction to the Minstrel's Songs) except the Tragedy of Ælla in the ten-lined stanza. *That*, From the arbitrary origin of all measures, it by no means follows, *because* neither Gower, nor Chaucer, nor Lydgate, nor their cotemporaries ever used the ten lined stanza with the rhymes disposed like Rowley's and closing with an Alexandrine, *that therefore* neither Rowley nor any other author of taste in that age, could not or did not either adopt or invent it.

As to ANCIENT LANGUAGE they conceive; *That*, The Poems of Rowley are written in a provincial dialect, according to the idiom of the people, in whose country the author resided and was probably born. *That*, the inflexion and orthography of words in so remote a period is a matter of very great uncertainty.

That,

That, the grammar of the ancient English language affords many instances of want of precision. *That*, Many words objected to, as not existing in any author whatsoever but Rowley, are actually found in other writers, some prior to, some cotemporary with, and some posterior to his age; all of which the diligence of future commentators may probably discover. *That*, Many of those words cannot be found in those glossaries and dictionaries to which Chatterton had access. *That*, Chatterton has actually given a false interpretation of many terms in these poems. *That*, There is no ground for supposing that he coined these words without an absurdity. *That*, As to the insertion of some words in these poems, prior to the supposed Rowley's age, it is no more than has been customary with all poets in all ages and nations. *That*, As to modern phrases and words, some of them were necessarily introduced by Chatterton to supply the chasms wherever the originals were

were deficient, and that even most of these modern terms may be paralleled in ancient authors. *That*, As to the language being so very intelligible, Authors prior to and some cotemporary with Rowley, furnish many instances of as great ease and fluency as in the present age; in particular, his cotemporary Lydgate *throughout* his writings.

As to HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS, and the LEARNING contained in these Poems, they are of opinion; *That*, These poems abound with much uncommon and recondite erudition, which, upon sober examination, appears to have been impossible for a youth of Chatterton's age, situation and circumstances to have attained, and could only have been the lot of a very superior scholar. *That*, This learning cannot be resolved into the idea of general reading, but must have been drawn from the original sources of information; in particular that many names of the Saxon *Earls* or *Comites*,
men-

mentioned in the Battle of Hastings are to be found in no historian now extant, and are only discoverable in the Doomsday book, whose authority cannot be questioned, and to which Chatterton doubtless could not have had recourse. *That*, The Greek language was cultivated in the reign of Edward the fourth, and prior to that period in England, as may be shewn from undoubted authority, and that the works of Homer and Xenophon, to instance no others, were then read. *That*, Many works of excellence in different languages, have been buried among dust and manuscripts for ages, till some fortunate circumstance has brought them forth to light. *That*, Thousands of learned and able men in all ages have lived and died in obscurity, of the world unknowing and unknown, either from choice, or some peculiarity attending their situation. *That*, As learning in those dark ages was principally confined to ecclesiastics, there is no absurdity

furdity in the idea of Rowley's proficiency in the Greek language, *if* it be necessary to suppose that the author of these poems must have been acquainted with the works of Homer.

As to A COMPARISON OF THE POEMS ATTRIBUTED TO ROWLEY WITH THOSE WRITTEN BY CHATTERTON, they conceive; *That*, There is so great an inequality between them, that it is impossible for them to have been the work of the same author. *That*, The poems of Rowley are uniformly supported in every attribute of just and legitimate composition; whereas in those by Chatterton, though there are many bright and ingenious thoughts in no inelegant versification, yet that the whole are composed in so vague and desultory a manner, with such mistakes in mythology and historical allusions, with such a want of design and regularity of conduct in every part, as mark a very inferior

ferior person as a writer and as a scholar.* *That*, Any one who seriously reflects on the nature of composition and of the powers of the human mind, must easily perceive the source from whence these errors and inequalities sprung. *That*, To speak of Chatterton's having composed the Poems in dispute, when in a state of ease and unembarrassed in his circumstances, is to speak of a time which never was experienced by that unfortunate and ingenious youth; and finally, *That*, Every great author has a manner peculiar to himself, both in style and sentiment, and that no adequate reason can be assigned, that the author of the Poems attributed to Rowley, *could* have been the author of The Miscellanies, and of many other similar

* Sunt omnia Adolescentis, non tam re et maturitate, quam spe et expectatione laudati.

Cicero Orator. Sect. 30.

G pro-

productions of Chatterton hitherto unpublished.

WHAT have now been laid before the reader, appear to be the *Principal Arguments* which the learned Advocates of either opinion have advanced in support of their several positions. It will easily be perceived that each of them might have been extended to a considerable length; but it seemed to me, whatever it might have been to others, a desideratum in this affair, that rather the sum and substance of the whole should be comprized in as few words as possible, and exhibited at one view. There are other minuter considerations which the fertility of commentators will suggest from every page of such singular compositions as the Poems before us. But this would have been a boundless pursuit, and foreign to the design of this Essay. I trust that any one may now
with

with little difficulty and expence of time, review the principal arguments which I have just presented to the reader detached from each other, and unembarrassed with ideas of less moment.

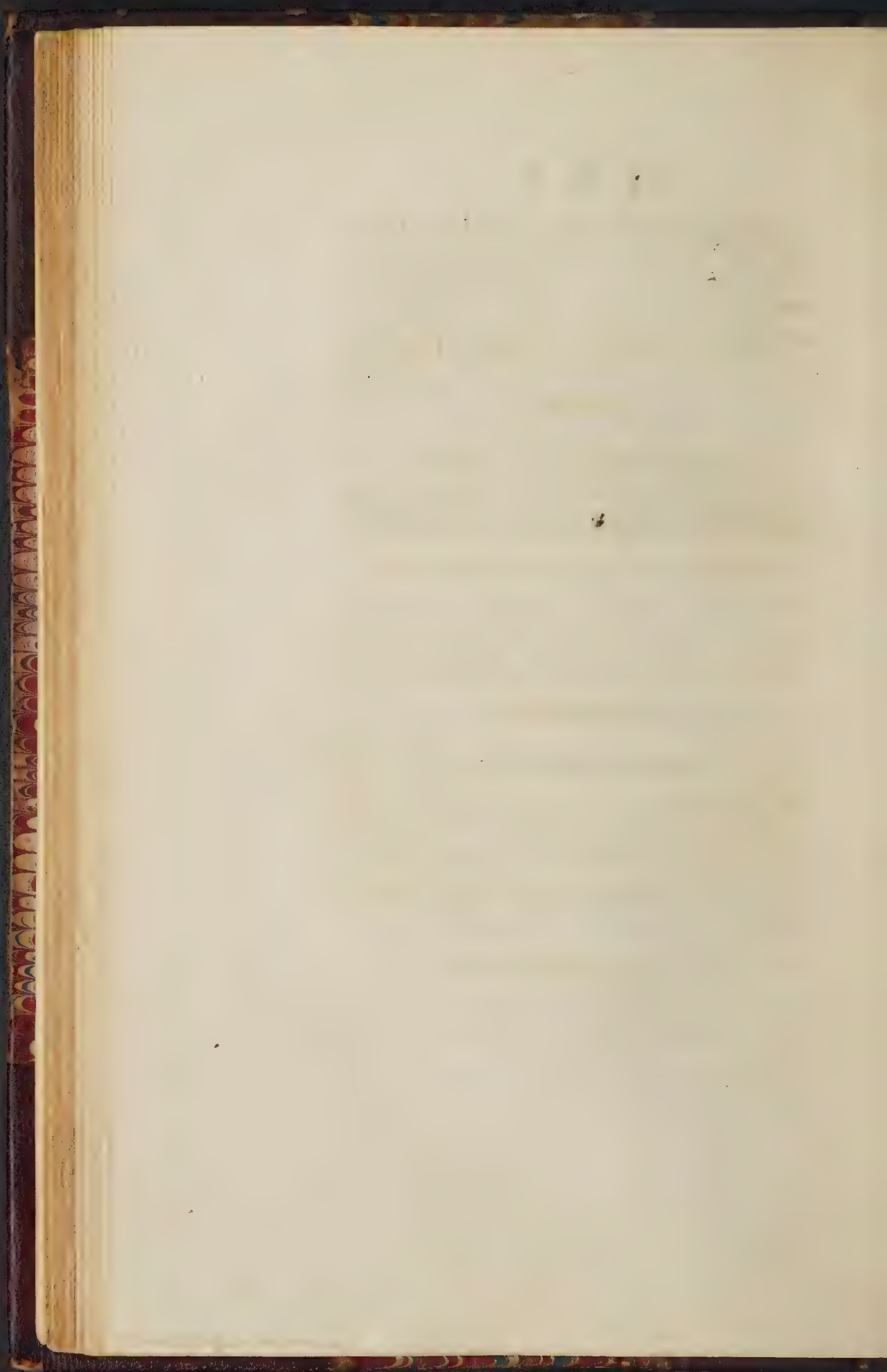
Every man is partial to his own inventions; and is disposed to embrace those arguments as of the greatest efficacy, which he fancies he himself had previously discovered. This indeed is eminently true in a Controversy of this nature, in which, upon every hypothesis, ideas can never be wanting, and will require great discrimination and arrangement.

It is necessary to have an accurate view of the several component parts of any subject, and of their relation to the whole and to each other, before we can pronounce upon its merits. This in any case requires patient investigation, whose slow and silent operations seldom
fail

fail of success: but how few will submit to labour and unwearied attention. When any subject becomes fashionable, and is submitted to public discussion, we must expect adventurers daily to arise, and the press will groan under its burthen: It was probably a consideration of this nature which prompted a most ingenious writer and deep observer of mankind, to compose a chapter in which it is shewn, that it is possible for an Author not to write the worse, for having some previous knowledge of the subject, about which he is to treat.

However, the diversity of opinion among men, should above all things recommend to us caution, charity and diffidence; since the number of understandings formed to explore any latent truth, is comparatively small. The real obscurity indeed of many subjects is such, as often obliges the greatest men,
after

after their utmost efforts, to acknowledge that the result of all their speculations amounts but to this, that they know a little less than the rest of mankind. Still we are infinitely obliged to those who will add their assistance to the common cause of Literature in whatever department, as all arts have a powerful, though often unperceived, connection with each other.



SECTION III.

REMARKS ON SOME PARTICULAR ARGUMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN ADVANCED, AND THE CONCLUSION.

Le *Saturnien* & le *Syrien* s'épuiserent alors
en conjectures ; mais après beaucoup de Rai-
sonnemens, fort ingénieux et fort incertains,
IL EN FALLÛT REVENIR AUX FAITS.

Voltaire *Micromegas*. Chap. 2.

C O N T E N T S

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SECTION THE THIRD.

The Power of Genius—Chatterton considered as an Impostor—His irregular Life, whether any objection to his being the Author of Rowley's Poems—On the Greek Language being understood in the Age of Rowley—Whether Superiority of Genius ever produced a perfect model in the infancy of Composition—What may be concluded from a comparison of the Poems attributed to Rowley with those of the same supposed date and others of modern composition—Additional thoughts on External Evidence—Conclusion resulting from the whole Enquiry.

REMARKS, &c.

SECTION III.

AS I hope, that I have now produced every thing material in the various arguments which the Advocates of either opinion in this controversy have enforced; it is by no means unnatural to consider some few of them, and to lay before the Reader, what seems to me, a just conclusion from the whole. I am not conscious of having suppressed any of the proofs which tend to establish either part; and I have given the naked arguments, divested of those ample illustrations which they have received, and unsupported by the names of the learned authors who first advanced them. I therefore

therefore am induced to think, that there is at least a point of view from which the curious spectator may contemplate the intire structure. And here, what Mr. Locke recommends to those who are willing to conduct their minds in the way of reason, is not wholly inapplicable, or unworthy of our serious attention. “ Where a Truth, (says he,) is
 “ made out by one demonstration, there
 “ needs no further Enquiry; but in
 “ Probabilities, where there wants demonstration to establish the truth
 “ beyond doubt, there it is not enough
 “ to trace one argument to its source,
 “ and observe its strength or weakness;
 “ but all the arguments after having
 “ been so examined on both sides, must
 “ be laid in balance one against another,
 “ and upon the whole the understanding
 “ determine its assent.”*

* Locke's Conduct of the Understanding.
 Sect. 7.

There

There are some few select arguments, on which I shall bestow a cursory notice, and present them to the reader's consideration.

THOSE who contend that the Poems are a forgery, resolve all objections into the strength and power of Chatterton's genius. I think it should be considered, that it is necessary to distinguish what is extraordinary from what is impossible. For though it is hard to assign any limit to the operations of the mind, yet the most vivid intellect is found to be progressive; and the power of Judgement, that power which separates, rejects and combines, is seldom or never exerted in its full excellence, but at an age somewhat advanced, and is then, I believe, the last effort of genuine abilities. I have exalted ideas of what is called Genius; but I have exalted ideas also of the Understanding; of the province
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of Reason, as well as of the faculty of Fancy.

It is also with some surprise, that I hear Chatterton spoken of as an Impostor in general, without one qualifying circumstance. If he was one, he was of such a singular nature as this world never before saw. Here is a specific Impostor, one of the first Poets, (I mean upon the supposition of his being the Author of Rowley's Poems) that any age ever knew, who did not reach his eighteenth year ere he expired; a boy of acknowledged vanity, yet refusing to gratify it in an honourable manner, and eagerly grasping at it when scarce worth the having; constantly denying, except in the single instance of the first Part of the Battle of Hastings, the fact where-with he is now charged, and that, without one motive of interest, without a prospect of reputation, or of raising him-
self

self to fortune. I cannot resolve all these circumstances into one general turn, a singularity of temper; I must have some adequate cause; I must perceive the agreement and disagreement of ideas before I acknowledge the power of truth. Surely, we may say with the learned Huet; “*Quæ facti gratia, quæ*
“*merces in re literariâ, unde quæstus nullus,*
“*nulla viro alienum nomen usurpanti, suum*
“*disſimulanti gloria ?**”

It has been observed, that it was rather unfortunate for Chatterton, that Lauder's infamous attempt on Milton, and other literary frauds, had been canvassed so lately, as to infuse suspicions into the minds of Readers. For my own part, I esteem it a very fortunate circumstance; for who can wish that his fellow-creatures should be imposed upon, or become the dupes of unexa-

* Huet. *Demonst. Evan.* V. i. p. 19. ed. 8vo.

mined doctrines, or impudent assertions. Even errors themselves in important subjects cease to be dangerous, from the very moment it is permitted to contradict them. For, as a principal cause of Error lies in wrong measures of Probability; as soon as an ingenuous mind seriously disposes itself to sift and examine the grounds of knowledge and the nature of things as they are in themselves; it rarely fails, by gradual advances and continued diligence, to attain the end of all its pursuits, the discovery of Truth.

It has been objected, that a Youth of such dissolute principles and irregular life as Chatterton, never could have been the author of the poems attributed to Rowley, as the dictates of religion, and the precepts of morality with which they abound, must have been too offensive to a mind so constituted. If this were the only argument for the authenticity of Rowley, I fear that
 authen-

authenticity could find but few rational advocates. It is not only in the days of indignant Satirist, that we find men, whose sanctity is hypocrisy, and whose morality, licentiousness. Would to God the experience of all Ages and of all Countries did not furnish us with examples of Writers who have displayed the pleasures of Virtue, and even the awful doctrines of Religion, with all the energy and colouring of genuine Piety, while the whole secret tenour of their lives, has been one continued disgrace upon those doctrines which they so openly avowed, and so ably illustrated. This argument should not have been insisted on so vehemently; it may be ridiculed, it may be confuted. I hope however, that a justly celebrated writer has passed too severe and unwarrantable a censure upon the whole poetical tribe, (in his late entertaining and very original work) when he numbers the ingenious Mr. West among "the few Poets,

to whom the Grave needed not to be terrible.”*

It has been mentioned, that the Greek language was not understood in England in the age of Rowley, and yet the author of the Poems seems to have been acquainted with the writers in that language. I cannot myself think, that there is any necessity to affirm that any of these compositions, not even the Battle of Hastings, or the song to *Ælla*, absolutely suppose a previous acquaintance with the works of Homer or Pindar; even if it be allowed, that those classics were then understood in this country. Mr. Warton, in his second Dissertation prefixed to his History of Poetry, has indeed clearly shewn, that we were not ignorant of the language in that period, and much earlier. To what degree of

* Johnson's Lives of the Poets. Vol. 4. p. 316. Ed. 8vo. Life of Gilbert West.

accuracy the language was understood, cannot now be ascertained; and whoever consults Fabricius's *Bibliotheca Græca* and other books of a similar nature, will find little more than general information on the subject, and nothing that is satisfactory. He must undertake a much harder task than I should chuse, who thinks it necessary to prove that any particular priest did, or did not understand Greek in the fifteenth century. As I cannot say that this seems to affect the Poems either way, it would and, I fear, must be but an idle expence of time and labour to pursue it any further.

BUT one question has been proposed, which always appeared to me very curious, and deserves a short disquisition. It is this. "Whether Superiority of Genius ever produced a perfect model in the infancy of composition?" Without entering minutely into the nature of writing, the annals of poetical history

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present us with a most remarkable example. Genius, we know, is peculiar neither to age nor country. The innate powers of the mind doubtless require cultivation, and in the proper season will produce fruits suitable to the labour which has been bestowed upon them. I am not here speaking of an early maturity in a particular person, but only of a country where literature and composition may be regarded as in their infancy. In such a country and in such an age, appeared a Man, who in the vigour of all his glorious faculties, without assistance, without example, gave to the world a *WORK*, which has been the admiration and model of all succeeding Poets. What conjecture, what reason shall we ever be able to assign, why *HOMER*, who, as far as Tradition reaches, had no guide, no precursor, should at once, instantaneously burst forth in all the united splendour of poetic excellence.

ience*. That all succeeding generations should have been indebted to him for the art of the narration and the texture of the fable, with all the incidental circumstances which conspire to produce perfection: and finally that he should have cloathed the loftiest concep-

* There is a passage in Cicero de Claris Oratoribus, which at first might seem to contradict this opinion. He says; *Nihil est inventum simul et perfectum*: nec dubitari debet, quin fuerint ante Homerum Poetæ; quod ex eis carminibus intelligi potest, quæ apud illum, et in Phæacum, et in procorum Epulis canuntur.—But it may be answered, that a desultory song of a Minstrel, or an *Aoidos* at a Banquet, is a very different thing from the present subject matter. I suppose it is impossible to settle the origin of Poetry in the sense used by Cicero. In this sense Poetry is almost coæval with mankind. It would be idle to take up the Reader's time any further on this point.

tions in a dignity and simplicity of expression yet unrivalled.

We can reason but from what we know. If we appeal to the records of History, no one ever yet disputed with him in priority of time* among his own coun-

* It is needless to mention the scholastic dispute relative to Hesiod's claim in this particular: in the present consideration however, even this Poet would serve for an example: Cowley observes, "His great antiquity is visible through the gravity and *simplicity of his style.*" Cowley's Essay on Agriculture.—I beg leave to add a few words relative to the preservation of ancient authors.—Let any reflecting man seriously consider with himself the manner in which ancient authors have been delivered down to posterity, and of whose authenticity few rational enquirers have presumed to doubt. Let him revolve the mode of their preservation, the scanty materials in those early ages, the uncertain origin

country-men. The greatest Critics of antiquity refer to him as the standard of propriety; not simply as the Founder of the Epic, but with respect to the niceties of language, on the very particles of speech, and on points of which *we* can scarce form an adequate idea. I know not how it was, but Language seems to have proceeded from him prepared and perfected at once.

Indeed if this single instance were suffered to have its due weight, it would

origin even of letters themselves, the defects of oral tradition, the feeble assistance which art could then supply. Let him call in array before him every circumstance with which the works of Grecian and Roman genius, demanding a perpetuity of existence, have had to struggle; let him extend these ideas in their just dimensions, and he will not instantly or easily reject the truth of any absolute fact, merely because it is *extraordinary*.

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appear rather presumptuous to decide on the date of any author in any tongue, merely from the modern cast of the writing. Since we all have seen and contemplated what Homer effected in the infancy of his language; long, long before that golden period, which the venerable author of *Hermes* (whose loss is deeply felt in the republic of letters) terms with an enthusiastic rapture, *THE EFFULGENCE OF GRECIAN GENIUS*.*

A COMPARISON has been formed between these Poems and others of the same supposed date, as well as the productions of modern times. Different conclusions have been drawn from hence with respect to their authenticity. As to my own part, I have laboured through many an ancient composition, to observe what was valuable in it,

* *Hermes*. Ch. 5. note g.

either in regard to the justness of sentiment, or the harmony of the numbers. But if I speak impartially of the Authors of the age in question, they doubtless will be found *thin sown with ought of profit or delight* : the metre may be legitimate, but it is uncouth ; the subjects are often uninteresting, and the mode of treating them is not unfrequently diffuse and languid. Yet among these remains, valuable still for their antiquity, there are many splendid passages, eminent for diction, for harmony, and the same easy turn of expression which prevails in modern times. This is particularly to be found in some of the works of Lydgate ; who, in this latter respect, is almost as easy to be understood as any writer in the present century. Yet whoever wishes to argue from this consideration in the present case, must take the whole, and not mere detached parts. The truth must be acknowledged ; things must be viewed as they really are in themselves.

It

It must be confessed by an impartial enquirer, that there is nothing absolutely equal to Rowley, in all the records of our ancient poetry : though there are some compositions not altogether dissimilar in some points. Inequality is not the characteristic of this author, whoever he may be : whatever subject is treated in that volume, is marked with the hand of a master, with the enthusiasm of the poet, and the judgment of the critic. The utmost that I should think proper to urge, from harmonious lines and passages now extant in ancient authors, is, that it appears from those passages, that there was at least, what may be termed a *Capability* in our language at that early period. Either our poets did not then sufficiently pursue their point when they had attained a transient excellence ; or their ear was so accustomed to the production of the *è final*, as not to be offended by it, and at other times was perfectly satisfied with the mere numerical scanion of the verse ; or their genius

was

was unequal to the task of uniform perfection, and the efforts of patient and unremitted attention. Those who esteem the Poems of Rowley as authentic, are of opinion, that the powers of this Poet were so great, as to have seized this very *capability* in the language, which I just observed, and by adding to it an extensive erudition and consummate judgment, to have produced such compositions as are indisputably superior to all those of his cotemporaries, and appear by no means unworthy of the greatest name in the annals of Poetry.

As to many of the various modern formularies of expression interspersed in these Poems, and to be found in Dryden, Pope, Gray*, or others, doubtless they were inserted by Chatterton either to

* Such as *Clouds of Carnage* from Gray, and other expressions; by the introduction of however which it is to be observed, that the sense or propriety of the several passages is very frequently injured.

please

please his own ear, or to restore some parts which were lost, or in places where the words were difficult to be decyphered. No one can be such an outrageous advocate for their authenticity as not to allow this. Let every argument be considered rationally, according to its own nature; as it often happens, that by straining it further than it will bear, and, as it were, forcing it into the service, it loses even that degree of strength and conviction, which it otherwise would carry with it.

I beg leave to add a few words relative to the External Evidence. As the present Question cannot be called into discussion under legal solemnities as to the truth of the several facts; that confirmation, which is an end of all strife, is not to be had or required of the several witnesses in this cause. The nature of the affair is not of consequence enough, nor is it capable of being treated
in

in this manner. All the information which has been received, has been voluntary, and given by persons who cannot be suspected of any interest to deceive. It may be granted, that the testimony even of an honest man is liable to the imperfections of memory, and other human infirmities, especially if delivered at any distance of time after the transaction. Yet in the present case, I would observe, that the principal persons give one and the same consistent account as to the material fact.

It appears to me highly improper and incautious to strive to invalidate plain facts by terming them, THE TALES OF RELATIONS AND THE RECOLLECTIONS OF APPRENTICES. If *this method* of debasing and invalidating evidence were to be once introduced and allowed in common life; it must affect the very principles upon which human society is founded, and by which all human affairs are carried
on.

on. I mean, if we but for a moment forget, that the credit due to the testimony of any man, does not arise from his civil rank in life, but from the integrity of his character. If *the method*, (and as I would not be misunderstood or misrepresented, I repeat it) if *the method* of treating this subject be found to involve higher concerns; Rowley, and Poetry and Antiquity and Literature are set aside and forgotten.—When I object against *this method* of proceeding, and oppose it with that earnestness which it requires; I am not pleading the cause of Rowley or Chatterton; I am pleading for mankind, for their best, their dearest interests.

To return :—As to the different opinions of the abilities of Chatterton, it is no part whatsoever of the evidence, in my judgment. Some may think him equal to any composition, others may depress his talents beneath their real value;

value; it is not what we think in this or that particular, it is from a combination of the whole, from a collation of circumstances, that we must deduce a regular conclusion.

It is the design of LAW to come to rigid demonstration in all matters of public and private right: yet even there not only positive, but circumstantial evidence must also be admitted, and decisions formed accordingly; inasmuch as we can have no greater evidence than the nature of the thing will allow. Our dearest rights must frequently be determined according to Probability. When we have examined a subject thoroughly and sincerely, we have acted like honest men, and no more is required of us but to acquiesce in the event. I only urge considerations of this nature to those who are engaged in the affair, whatever opinion they now hold, or may hereafter adopt. We cannot-indeed expect that
many

many people will give a large portion of their thought or time, either to the fates and fortunes of a Priest in the Fifteenth Century, or of an ingenious Youth in the Eighteenth, or even to the state and progress of the poetical art itself in the early ages.

As I am unwilling to employ more time or words than are absolutely necessary to the illustration of this subject, I shall not consider at large any of the minuter doctrines. I therefore beg leave to lay before the Reader the following CONCLUSION, as the result of my whole Enquiry.

IF the Defenders of the Antiquity and Authenticity of the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley, were disposed to admit every *internal* objection which has been urged against them; if all the arguments drawn from the style, composition, allusions,

sions, modern passages, harmony of the numbers, and whatever comes to us in a questionable shape, were supposed true for a moment; if the principles of taste and critical discernment be allowed to operate in full force against their authenticity; still the following considerations are not unworthy of our notice: these at least must still be true, unless the foundations of evidence be torn up, and the basis of all legal transactions be done away.

For from these large concessions, (which I cannot think it wholly necessary to be made) it will not follow:

That, THOMAS CHATTERTON was not born at Bristol on the 20th of November, 1752.

That, he was not educated at a Charity School in that City, where the children

dren were taught nothing but to read and write English and cast accompts.

That, he was not in the School under the inspection of the master, from seven o'clock till twelve in the morning, and from one till five, in the evening, during the summer, and in winter, from eight till twelve in the morning, and again, from one till four in the afternoon.

That, he did not continue at Coulston's school from the age of eight years or a little earlier till he was fourteen years and seven months old.

That, he was not at that period *bound apprentice* to Mr. Lambert an attorney at Bristol, with whom, and in whose office he lived till he was seventeen years of age and five months, and thence went to London, where he died unfortunately three months after.

That,

That, he was not ignorant of the French, Saxon and Latin Tongues*.

That, the interpretations given by Chatterton to the ancient terms in the Poems attributed to Rowley, were not taken from Kersey's Dictionary and Speght's Glossary to Chaucer, since he was not in possession of Skinner's Etymologicon, and of Benson's Vocabularium Anglo-Saxonicum, but for a few days, which he returned to the gentleman of whom he borrowed them, professing that they were of no kind of service to him, as being written in Latin.

That, he did not bring the Tragedy of Ælla, the most perfect of all the compositions ascribed to Rowley, to Mr. Catcott, when he was between sixteen and seventeen years of age.

* To be acquainted with a few terms or words in any Language, can hardly, I suppose, be said to constitute a knowledge of it.

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That,

That, he did not constantly deny his being the author of the Poems attributed to Rowley, (except in that single instance of the first part of the Battle of Hastings) and as constantly acknowledge the Miscellanies in the different magazines, which have since been collected and published in one volume, with his name,

That, there did not exist several ancient parchments from the Chest in Redcliff Church, many of which are actually at this instant in Mr. Barrett's possession.

That, the whole of what may be termed Chatterton's Literary Life, did not consist of about three years and a half, in which period he produced all the Poems attributed to Rowley, and that volume of Miscellanies confessedly his own, besides a large collection yet unpublished.

IF all, or even more than these plain propositions are incontrovertibly true, if we cannot be said to be misled by giving our assent to them; I leave it to the Reader to draw what inference he pleases, in regard to the *probability* or *possibility* of Chatterton's being the Author of the Poems in question. I wish however that it may be an inference deduced from a due, fair, and impartial examination of all and each of the circumstances, without any regard to the authority of the learned writers of the different opinions.

It is not for me to judge how far any man's speculations may extend; but finding in myself nothing to be truer, than that the very existence of society is preserved, and every valuable interest maintained, by a confidence grounded on the testimony of our fellow-creatures in every concern; I gratefully accept and acquiesce in their voluntary and genuine information, and bind up my reason to

make such inductions, as are accordant to *matter of fact*; though some seeming difficulties should occur, for which I may be unable to account.* For I conceive, that when any question is about a matter of fact, it is begging that question to bring, as a proof of it, an hypothesis, which is the very thing in dispute.

But it is far from my design or inclination to press any doctrine, or force down its belief with an indecent vehemence; or to think the worse of any man's understanding, who views arguments in a different light from myself; particularly on a subject like the present. I only ask for mutual toleration and candour of discussion, and that every man should be allowed to judge for himself,

* A celebrated Philosopher justly observes, that those who require a reason for every thing indiscriminately, destroy the essence of Reason itself. ΑΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΖΗΤΟΥΝΤΕΣ ΛΟΓΟΝ, ΑΝΑΙΡΟΥΣΙ ΛΟΓΟΝ. A remark this, worthy of all acceptance.

fairly

fairly and in earnest. I will not repeat what I have said in former parts of this Essay, but leave it to the judgment of the intelligent reader, to whom I willingly submit these pages, without a thought of entering any further in the controversy. Errors I may have committed, but without intention ; opinions I may have controverted, but without asperity. Subjects like these may be drawn out, till their very continuity is an argument for withholding our labour. Having therefore now given that degree of attention to this singularly curious subject, which it seemed to me to deserve ; I here close my Enquiry, from which I have at least received as much pleasure and satisfaction as any mere literary question can afford. As such I took it up ; as such I lay it down.

But if, after all that has been, or may possibly be yet advanced, it shall still appear to the generality of mankind, that CHATTERTON is the real author of the
mas-

masterly compositions in dispute ; if not only the reputation of ROWLEY, but even his very existence must be done away ; I, who confess myself among the number of the old Bard's deluded votaries, may at least be allowed to pay him my tribute of veneration, and to address this supposed Father of harmonious English Poetry, in the expressive strain of the great Mantuan,

Salve, SANCTE PARENS, iterum salvete recepti
Nequicquam Cineres !

F I N I S.

C O N T E N T S

O F

E A C H S E C T I O N.

S E C T. I.

E X T E R N A L E V I D E N C E.

Introduction.—Motive for composing the Essay—Nature of Controversies—Different kind of Evidence and Proof on different Subjects—Substance of the account given by Mrs. Chatterton and Mrs. Newton—Mr. Smith—Mr. Carey—Mr. Clayfield—Mr. Catcott—Mr. Capell—Mr. Ruddall Mr. Thistlethwaite—Thoughts on considering subjects of this or the like kind, as relating to Literature in general.

S E C T

S E C T. II.

I N T E R N A L E V I D E N C E.

Diversity of Judgment in all Matters of Taste, in particular of Poetry; and in a peculiar Manner of such Poetry, as that now in dispute.—Arguments AGAINST *The Authenticity* of the Poems attributed to Rowley, under the following Heads. 1. Style, Composition, and Sentiment. 2. Metre. 3. Ancient Language. 4. Historical Allusions, and the Learning contained in the Poems. 5. Comparison of Chatterton's own Poems with those attributed to Rowley.—Arguments FOR *their Authenticity* under the same Heads.

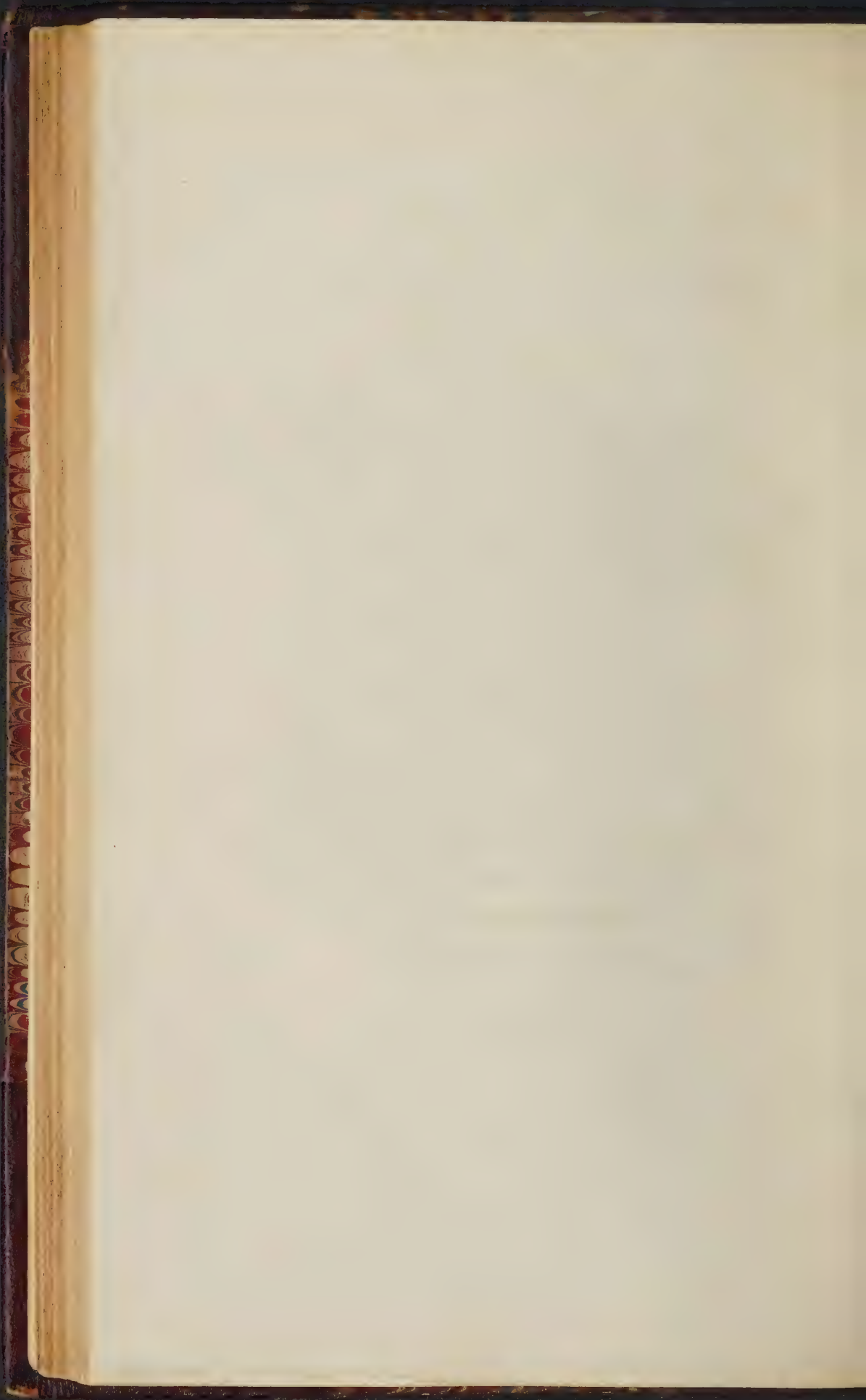
S E C T

S E C T. III.

REMARKS ON SOME PARTICULAR
ARGUMENTS ;

AND THE CONCLUSION.

The Power of Genius——Chatterton considered as an Impostor——His irregular Life, whether any Objection to his being the Author of Rowley's Poems——On the Greek Language being understood in the Age of Rowley——Whether Superiority of Genius ever produced a perfect Model in the Infancy of Composition——What may be concluded from a Comparison of the Poems attributed to Rowley, with those of the same supposed Date, and and others of modern Composition——Additional Thoughts on External Evidence——CONCLUSION resulting from the whole Enquiry.



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR,
R U N I C O D E S.

IMITATED FROM THE
N O R S E T O N G U E ;

IN THE MANNER OF
M R. G R A Y.



2

STRICTURES

Upon a PAMPHLET intituled,
CURSORY OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

P O E M S

ATTRIBUTED TO

R O W L E Y,

A PRIEST of the FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

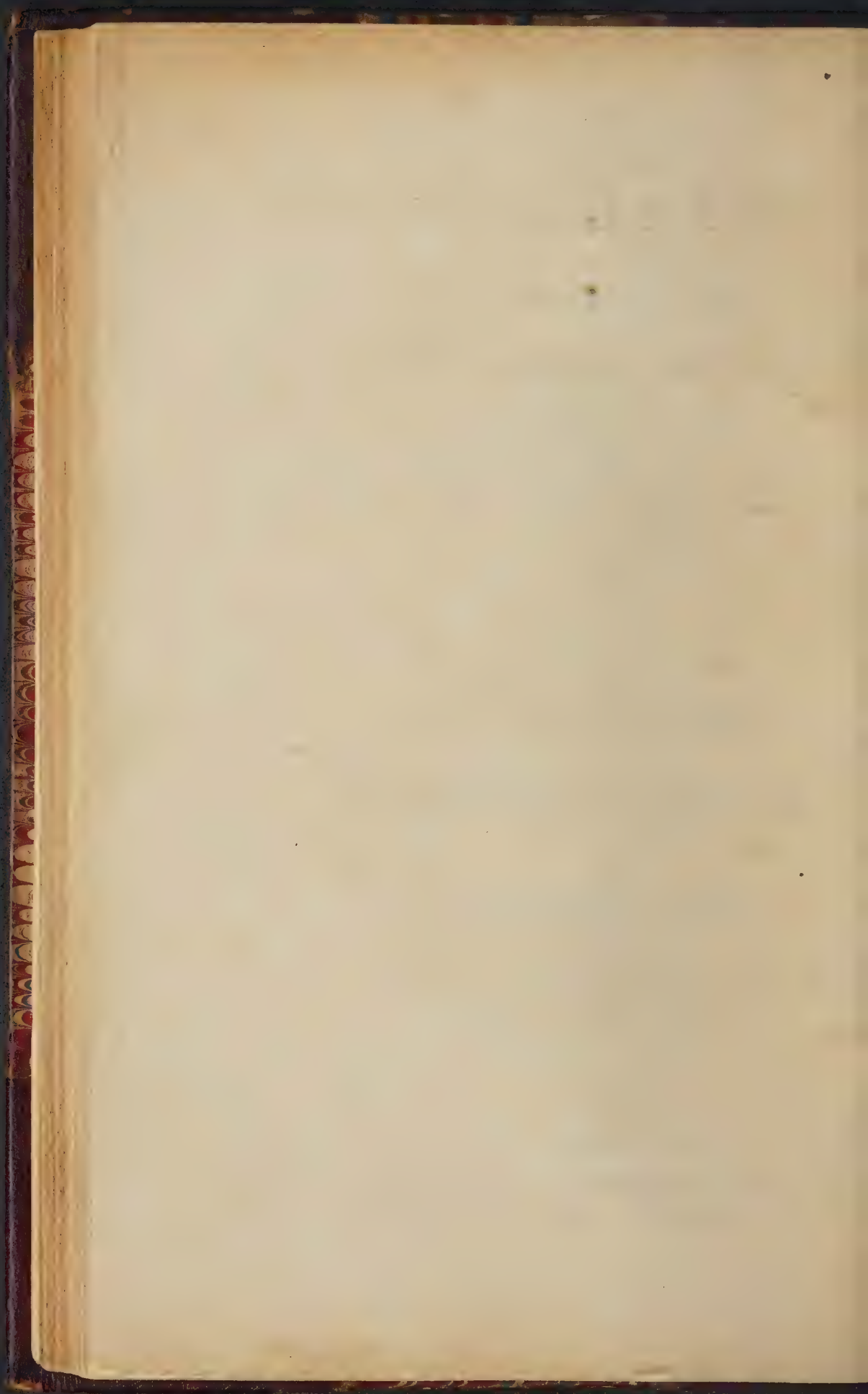
Solventur Risu tabulæ; Tu missus abibis. HOR.

With a POSTSCRIPT on
MR. THOMAS WARTON'S ENQUIRY
INTO THE SAME SUBJECT.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. STOCKDALE, opposite Burlington House,
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247
11



STRICTURES, &c.

THE * *Motto* adopted by our PAMPHLE-
TEER promises a writer abounding in
exertions of the risible muscles; some traces
therefore of pleasantry and of good-humor
might have been reasonably expected; but
alas! himself, no less than his ESSAY, must
be acknowledged "HASTY;" the crudi-
ties of an over heated imagination in the
CRITIC, have destroyed the candor of the
man, and politeness of the gentleman: un-
possessed of these qualities so honorable to
the heart, ebullitions of the head lose their
principal attraction. Well may an inferior
tremble to observe the "modesty" of the
great SCHOLAR, who hath in some degree
given rise to the "Cursory Observations"
stoutly impeached; and his VENALITY, a
censure

cenfure

* *Ridentem dicere Verum*
Quid vetat? HOR.

centure of which is set at defiance from every action of his life, arraigned through his *imputed* desire of "demanding an uncommon price" for his gratification of that PUBLIC, whom he hath so repeatedly obliged! A taste for English POETRY denied to this exalted character?—miserable obliquity of perverse insinuation!

* "The first and principal objection to the Poems, in point of their antiquity," arises, saith our Pamphleteer, from "the smoothness of their versification;" to invalidate the efficacy of this remark, copious quotations have been inserted to authenticate the occasional harmony of rhythm in compositions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I shall in another place hazard reflections upon the *principles* of this harmony. Our Pamphleteer is loosely satisfied with the production of contrasted passages, *disproving* the subsistence of harmony in the poets of England, "during the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, when compared with the verses of the person, whom he sets down as author of "The Battle of Hastings:" If the first be concluded to have strained a point on one side, the second may not surely be acquitted of a similar *conduct* on the other.

Hypo-

* Pamphlet, page 3.

Hypothesis is bewitching, and we are *instantly struck* with the *form* of our Pamphleteer's Two Examples, derived from the exordium of *each* number of the " Poetical Battle," in the elegant array of modern type; while the numerous quotations from the *other* writers adduced are suffered in the rugged cloathing of the days, to which they owe their birth. This (whether designed or no) tends to carry back conclusion to a period of remoter antiquity with respect to many of the latter, and to bring forward the poetry of the former to a day too recent for the existence of their real author. Ingenuity may be luxuriant in conjecture, but " internal evidence" speaks loudly for itself; this stubborn authority must, when our subject is the brain of the Bristol Enthusiast, be absolutely destroyed, before our *Pamphleteer's* arguments, partial to its abilities, may receive confirmation. Quotations, with concern I speak it, are introduced by the *last mentioned writer*, in the worst and most irksome metre of the several ages, in which the compositions from which they are made were written: a flowing facility of metre might have been gathered from many a passage, and from a whole Poem of CHAUCER, stripped of his ancient venerable garb. These would be experienced to yield little to the melody of many modern productions, with
a cha-

a characteristic mastery of reflection, too often undistinguished in the latter. The older English Poetry, it will be allowed, suffers much in its harmony from the practice of throwing accent to the closing syllable of a word; a practice abhorred in the prose and verse of our recent language. Granting, that the Poems in question are not assignable to the age of ROWLEY, the authority of our excellent Spencer is sufficient (to go no lower) for a confutation of the principle, ascribing them to the Bristol Boy of the eighteenth century, *and to no other*. A favorite writer of Eliza's period hath been designedly brought to view on this occasion, his versification going hand in hand with his description, in a most expanded subject commanding full powers of ingenuity; while terms and phraseology give an immediate life of modernism to the whole. "Lines, and half lines," upon which to build a system, unless by precarious architecture, are more consistently discarded; but at the same time to suppose our stripling of ambition capable of "purloining stone from stone" from superstructures of ancient English, and of "*cementing* a new fabric with his" *bare* "artificial mortar," is to attribute to his scientific improvement an eminence unconfirmed by his history. Yet our Pamphleteer proceeds; determined to a question of the field inch by
 inch,

inch, and condescending in a trice to the "articular preface" of speeches in the "Battle of Hastings." Pope in his version of Homer's Iliad closes heroic harangues with "Thus he, he said, &c." the conclusion from these premises is, that Chatterton certainly copied such modes of expression. They are moreover understood to have been "employed by Dryden and by Cowley," but these stars of the literary hemisphere ceased to shine long before the eighteenth century: "*sometimes*" (well-played caution!) "the form, which" our *Pamphleteer* alledges, that "Chatterton used," *his* supposed author of the Poems ascribed to ROWLEY, "was also employed by Spencer and others."*

The consideration of Stanza may not be improper; it succeeds immediately in the reasoning of our Pamphleteer. The stanza employed through the Poem of "The Battle of Hastings, Number I," consists of decasyllables of ten verses to a Stanza; of Numb. II. the

* Is it a cruelty to remind our Pamphleteer of his assertion, that "throughout these Poems we never find a Noun in the plural number joined with a Verb in the singular?" He hath (page 57 of his pamphlet) acknowledged this error in terms that seem however to argue triumph in his defeat: I know not, that it is necessary to observe the peculiarity above-noticed to be a Græcism. The Bristol Boy was wholly ignorant of the language. Spencer furnishes Græcisms in abundance.

the same number of verses with twelve syllables to the line concluding the stanza. The "Tragedy of Ælla" is constituted agreeably to the former, no less than "the Tragedy" (as it is called) "of Goddwyn; the Balade of Charitie" comprises seven decasyllables to a stanza: "The Epistle to Maistre Cannyng includes six only to a stanza," and the letter to the same "digne" personage has eight. Spencer's Fairy Queen supplies in every stanza nine decasyllabics. If we remark the Poems attributed to ROWLEY on the one hand, and to the *fond* Boy of Bristol on the other, a variety of Rhythm manifestly abounds even in the decasyllabic formation. "Rithme Royal," our Pamphleteer urges from Gascoygne, "is a verse of ten syllables, and seven such verses make a stasse;" an original word, expressive of the subsequent stanza—a pause, or resting place, from which the Poet proceeded with additional efforts upon his subject:—but what just inference from this business of stanza? it can only be, that ROWLEY *was not*; by no means, that Chatterton *was* Author of the Collection. The attribution, it may be added, of "The Yellow Roll" to the labour of Chatterton, instead of ROWLEY, affords no argument, authenticating the veracity of the *former* assertions. It may be enquired, whether our Pamphleteer is positively *certain*,
that

that Prior first employed the decasyllabic verse in ten lines to a stanza? Memory may be refreshed, or inexperience stimulated to enquiry, by the question proposed.

“Imitations of Pope, Shakespeare, Dryden and Rowe” (the names are produced in the precise order insisted upon by our Pamphleteer) “abound in the collection.” If Pope be confirmed to have been imitated by the author, or authors of these POEMS, a difficult struggle is to be maintained against the authorship of Chatterton, as far as relates to *them*: the truth is, that the plagiarisms concluded to have been committed upon the original Iliad by the strenuous advocates of ROWLEY are at once transferred by our Pamphleteer to Pope’s, or to Chapman’s * versions; the introduction of Chapman, as an authority, where Pope is concerned, creates suspicion; Pope’s version of the Iliad is not more valuable, than more easily procured from a circulating, or any other library. It should seem, from the last mentioned pursuits in the opposite parties, that the contest

was

* Pamphlet, page 16: I will beg leave to notice one, without enlargement upon the other imitations adduced, page 17, that the two verses quoted from “the Tragedy of *Ælla*,” are each extended to twelve syllables; is not a doubt thereby authorised concerning our Pamphleteer’s late argument deduced from a consideration of rhythm?

was to be fixed, in the arguments upon this collection, on originals, and copies of poetical works in general; and this would prove a vague enquiry.

“ Apparent imitations” are asserted from our Dramatist, whose equal hath not yet been supplied. The imputed adoption is expressed in these words,

“ My love is dead,

“ Gone to her death-bed :”

Shakespeare’s Hamlet treats us with,

“ No, no : he is dead ;

“ Go to thy death-bed.”

“ He never will come again.”

The closing line is the burden of the Song in Shakespeare. Surely the expressions in each quotation are derived from the fountain of nature, and may familiarly occur to writers on a subject, admitting such reflection ! The image adduced as imitated from Rowe was alike applicable in the age of ROWLEY and of ROWE. Who may now be represented to collect conclusions from “ morsels of lines and phrases ?” I have already declared imitation to be attended with problematical evidence ; it seems then alone consistently surmised, when an imitator’s predilection for the original, whom he imitates, is undeniably ascertained. He, “ Dean Milles,” saith our Pamphleteer, “ argues very rightly, that the whole of these Poems must have been written
by

by 'One Person :'' the declaration suited the purpose of the latter; but the Dean limits his remark to a total difference of life, disposition, and æra of existence between the Priest and the Stripling of Bristol; a difference necessarily occasioning "apparent distinction in their respective style, language, and sentiments." The Commentator ascribes to one the collection imputed by Mr. Bryant to several.

No decisive stress may seem justifiably laid upon the *exceeding* imitations, asserted to have been made from the Iliad, in "The Battle of Hastings." ROWLEY's acquaintance with Homer's Iliad may be greatly doubted; I purpose not to enter the list as advocate for his authorship of this Poem; but our Pamphleteer's prejudication in favor of Chatterton, as composer of the Battle of Hastings from one or other version of Homer in later periods, is altogether unsupported. "Whenever," adds our Pamphleteer, "a single thought can be shewn in these copies of the Grecian bard, that is found in the original, and not in any of his English translations, I will accede to any proposition, that he" (meaning Dean Milles) "pleases"—I suppose that he would be understood—any proposition, however absurd. It may be reasonably expected, that our Pamphleteer should admit the Dean to assert the same,

C 2 when

when " a thought, that is found in the English translations, is not observable in the original of Homer's Iliad, on the foregoing view of imitations from the Grecian poet: A fine preparatory to a remark, that the copies in " The Battle of Hastings from Homer's Iliad discover *some* circumstances existing in Pope's translation," of which but fainter traces appear in the original Greek. Ready I profess myself, once for all, to meet assertions, favorable to Chatterton's claim as to this, and any of the other Poems ascribed to ROWLEY, from a candid open display of passages from Pope's Works, be they original, or versions from the Mæonian muse!*

" Anachronisms abound in the modern antique compositions now under examination." So declares our Pamphleteer! The first of these Anachronisms, introduced by the last noticed gentleman, ascribes the " Art of knitting Stockings" to the age of our Edward

* Chatterton is boasted to have imitated (see Pamphlet, page 19) all the English poets, with whom he was acquainted: few, however, of these poets have been comparatively authenticated, as familiar to the *Bristol Urchin*: it behoves particularly our Pamphleteer to exhibit instances of his imitations in verses more unequivocally imputable to *his* pen, from recent poets of our country. Our Pamphleteer hath not favored us with sufficient examples of such *copies*; essential objects to corroborate his own immediate allegations.

Edwrd a the Fourth; on this doctrine, (I mean to prove it a mere dogma) the following reflections may be risked: the quotation is from "Ælla."

"She said, as her white hands white hosen were knitting:"—the word "hosen" is primarily interpreted "breeches," the invention whereof, though the "knitting of hose" hath been erroneously so imputed, has never been attributed to Scotland. Both "hose and knit," or more etymologically "cnit" are derived from the Anglo-Saxon, and from the figurative appropriation of the latter by Shakespeare, it may be concluded to have been long in use. Our Pamphleteer *approves not* a reference to this ancient language; yet the tenor of his argumentation compels a recourse to its employment. The real question however seems to be, not whether "knitting" prevailed in the days of Edward the Fourth, but in those when Ælla is estimated to have lived; a person necessarily comprehended to have then existed, being represented in the play to allude to such custom. *The term "knytte, or knyte," we may re-
collect

* The Company of Stocking-Knitters," saith Chambers, "established at Paris 1521, took for their patron St. Fiacre, who *is said* to have been the son of a King of Scotland." The establishment of a company implies no very recent experience of an art. Such is the legendary foundation of the claim as to the invention of knitting, arrogated by the rugged barbarians of the North!

collect to have been figuratively employed in "the tournament;" let the celebration recorded in this piece have taken place earlier or later than Edward the Fourth, the bladder of hypothesis, with respect to the origin of "knitting," bursts in the æra of Shakespeare, and conjectural deduction, that plaything of maturer age, vanishes into air; how great an interval before the birth of Chatterton!

On this, and the remaining heads of the anachronick argument, and indeed in his reasoning throughout, our Pamphleteer has rather borne hard against the claim of the Bristol Priest, than produced any remark determinately favorable to that of the Bristol Boy. "Bristol" he subjoins, "is called a city in these Poems, though it was not one 'till long after the death of Edward the Fourth; "city" in its primary signification is well known to have been a town incircled by a wall; which wall served the purpose of security against the insults of neighbours, or of a fortification in after-times, against an enemy invading from a distance. Our Pamphleteer interprets it in the partial construction of its application to "a town, which was a Bishop's See:" this definition of city holds not good with regard to several more considerable towns of England. "Gloucester is called city" in Domesday Book; Leicester has

has been chartered under the name of a "city;" Cambridge from length of years has been called "city" and "burgh" alike; and Ely hath been omitted in the enumeration of "cities," though a Bishop's See. Among the Romans *a place* sufficed to be a "city" to *which* many resorted, and where many resided together. The "legal" titles of burgh, town, and city, are now characteristically distinguished in the *southern* portion of our island.

"Cannynge is spoken of, as possessing a cabinet of coins, and other curiosities, a century at least before any Englishman ever thought of forming such a collection; oh! but!—" Mr. Horace Walpole," *subjoins* our Pamphleteer, "having a very curious collection of *pictures* and *prints*, Cannynge was furnished" by Chatterton "with a cabinet of *coins*;" the same idea is hazarded concerning the printing press of the "historic doubter" at "Strawberry-Hill." Cannynge is *thence* represented by the Boy to have "set up a printing press at Westbury." Painting "the representation," says Chambers, "of bodies in ducts, and draughts of lines, was restored to its ancient honors in Italy, towards the beginning of the fifteenth century; painting in oils, unknown to the ancients," was introduced "in the fourteenth." The examples last offered by our Pamphleteer are designed

to

to reconcile the right of Chatterton's authorship to the Poems ascribed to ROWLEY : if they serve to evince and confirm any assertion, it is the Lad's title to the appellation of continued impostor ; for which his name merits a stigma, from *honest reason*, never to be erased from its mind. The Spartan legislator allowed and encouraged theft in his growing youth, *provided* they purloined with that dexterity, securing secrecy to the plunderer. Unmerciful chastisement was inflicted on detection. This gentleman glories in behalf of the *thief*, at the time he turns informer against *him*, without a blush to pronounce the character a road to reputation. " Literary property," after a whimsical struggle for her first distinctions, now strongly entrenched within the fortress of law, *yet* shares a destiny unknown to *other* property. Thanks be to that law, the latter may not be with impunity seized, but the " tortious possessors" of the former have, in the present case at least, aright, as the first fortunate graspers, *provided* they maintain it by impudence and fraud. To speak fully upon " Cannyng's" alledged *collection* of coins," *the word* may possibly sound too high in modern ears, when applied to the fifteenth century : but as Cannyng might certainly, as it is surmised, have *collected* pictures and books ; why should coins be excluded as objects of his curiosity ?

This

This merchant of opulence, so greatly boasted, was furnished with the means of procuring coins, if not from abroad, through the channel of his commercial intercourse, yet more readily at home; a large proportion of this commodity remaining throughout the kingdom from the very departure of the Roman legions; without adding the quantity of coins exhibited in this country, during a series of subsequent ages. As to "the printing press at Westbury"—We are told that Cannyng purchased manuscripts; these he might naturally be desirous of publishing to the world. From no extravagant or *designing* representations, printed books are asserted to have been known 1430, and many were certainly delivered from the press fourteen years before the death of Cannyng. Caxton avowedly brought "the Art of Printing," most considerably improved, into England 1470, a declaration authenticated from the number of books, issuing from his particular impression; and indeed its exceeding utility not only to the communication of elegant knowledge, but its subserviency to purposes of more expanded traffic almost implies, that, rude and imperfect as it would not have failed to be in its origin, the invention had passed into England long before the days when Caxton flourished. The larger acquaintance of our country with the conti-

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nent,

nent, and the frequent importations of foreigners from most of its dominions, justify an opinion, that the English were not wholly ignorant of printing within a very short period of its first existence. On the more cultivated use of this most ingenious science may a remark be permitted? A less limited circulation of manuscripts thence prevailed, through a spirit of literary ambition more generally indulged; knowledge became widely diffused; *the worse* than Spanish padlocks of monasteries and cloisters, which fixed the modest maiden in a drear confinement, were burst asunder, and the layman, a busy bee, disdaining longer to endure a deprivation of sweets, abounding in the hives of luxurious drones, snatched them to the gratification of SOCIAL TASTE.*

An

* Certain other Anachronisms are commented, Pamphlet, page 25, in his own modest word "decisively," to cast down ROWLEY, and place the "wonderful forger" in his seat. What sort of "decisive" eminence his argument possesses to ascertain the title of the Bristol Boy to these Poems, it will be very difficult to determine. "Drawings in the technical sense of delineations with chalks, or Indian ink, are mentioned one hundred and fifty years before the word was used with that signification;" will our Pamphleteer hazard a positive assertion, that, drawing, on the less *finished* idea of "designing," was unknown in the days of Edward the Fourth? Are not improvements to be admitted in the *progress* of an art? "Painting in oils" was known in the times last mentioned, and drawing may be characterized her *eldest* sister.

“ An earlier fiction of” the Bristol Boy
“ is a short poem of two or three stanzas, on
the death of Richard the First, in alternate
rhyme.” He sends this poem to “ Mr.
Horace Walpole,” as having been “ found
at Bristol with many other ancient pieces.”
The learned gentleman signified, that “ no
such metres, exhibited as *ancient*, were known
in the age of Richard. The poem was in-
stantly suppressed, and the stripling shifted
the æra of his productions ;” but because no
“ alternate rhymes existed so early as Ri-
chard I. Mr. Walpole meant not surely to
assert, that no such rhymes were employed
in the days of Edward the Fourth, for honest
Geoffrey is a bar to such criticism ; though I
would not be understood to pronounce any
composition of the last to be uniformly car-
ried on in alternate rhymes.* A plain de-
duction,

* Where Chaucer treats us with alternate rhymes, one specimen of such measure is visible alone through a stanza of seven lines; a metre enlarged from his example by Spencer to nine. When Prior is said to have first written ten decasyllabics to a stanza, instead of the odd number prevailing in the age of Chaucer and of Spencer, though no specific instance may immediately occur of such practice in ages before Prior flourished, it would be hazardous to insist, at all events, that no stanza of ten decasyllabics is attributeable to an English poet existing in an earlier period. Spencer not only added two verses to Chaucer's stanza above-noticed, but closed his stanza with a duodecasyllabick, or Alexandrine: and I see no reason,

duction, it may seem, from the foregoing conduct in the Boy, who was alarmed before he was hurt, is, that he was altogether ignorant of the state and formation of English poetry; and surely, in course, of its language in ancient days! Would he otherwise have been guilty of the sottish woefulness of fallacy, and have doubted on occasion of "Mr. Walpole's" sentiment? "Among the manuscripts, which Chatterton *pretended* to have discovered in" Cannyng's "celebrated chest" in the Bristol church so often noticed, "was a painter's bill:* the same bill was faithfully copied" by the Boy, "from anecdotes of painting," printed some years before, and had been originally transcribed by Vertue *from* some old parchments (it should strictly run *an* old parchment) "in St. Mary Redcliffe's church at Bristol." The conclusion from this anecdote is, that Chatterton did not forge the "painter's bill" in question: though he forged not in the present case, he intentionally sought to deceive; if he sent this "copy
of

reason, why the addition of a tenth line in an heroic stanza should not have taken place between the age of Spencer, and the more recent one of our "poetical Secretary of Embassy." The enlargement must have been strikingly familiar, when poetry was constituted on more genuine principles of harmony.

* Pamphlet, page 27.

of a true bill" to "*Mr. Horace Walpole*," it is plain, that he had never read that "writer's anecdotes of painting;" if he circulated it at Bristol alone, he must surely have been afraid to risque it even *there* before *less* distinguishing judges, as an invention of his own; at no rate, however, may it on any view of this business be concluded, that Chatterton had read the "*Anecdotes of Painting*," which many in Bristol must have seen, perused, admired, and remembered. The history of the "eminent artist Vertue may be of service to explain the enigma: His life, communicated with several references from "*Mr. Walpole's lives of the engravers*" to the "*authors of the Biographia Britannica*," describes him to have visited Gloucester 1730, or "about that time," when, though neither in this, or any other excursion thro' England he is represented to have visited Bristol, we may not safely deny, that he was at the latter place, from which he furnished his account of the "painter's bill." That a curiosity so alive, as that of Vertue, should be appealed by so frippery a register of intelligence, if he had possessed information of "*Cannynge's chests*," is not to be supposed; the truth seems to have been this: "*Cannynge's chests*" had been left open in the "tower of the church from 1727," just three years before Vertue came to Bristol. In
the

the last mentioned year "the papers relating to matter of this church were removed from the chests in the Tower, and separately deposited under lock and key "in the south porch of the same church." Vertue appears not to have visited the Tower," which the person, from whom he procured an inspection of the "painter's bill" had probably no inducement to intimate; the recency of the removal just noticed being no reasonable object of his suspicion, as to any value affixable to the parchments contained in the chests still remaining in the Tower: the chests and parchments were at that period equally unregarded, and the Tower itself may scarcely *otherwise* be esteemed to have repaid the trouble of access to its eminence. "Vertue's pursuit of every thing, that related to our ancient poets," may still be pronounced "*indefatigable*," but "his discoveries of ROWLEY's Poems," or those of any writer at that time in the chests, be peremptorily denied.*

It

* The bosom of the Bristol Enthusiast seems to have been the rank repository of folly and of knavery alike; and though worldly fondness dignify the latter with the name of wisdom, it is in reality the usual concomitant of the former. He is very near proving himself a fool who studies to make fools of others. Detected by "Mr. Walpole" in the affair of the poem concerning "the death of Richard Cœur de Lion," he immediately "shifts the æra of this production, and of others:" this

is

It may be a doubt which is most unfortunate, our Pamphleteer, who argues the conviction of one forgery as legal evidence on a trial for another, or the Boy on whose latter trial such evidence is accounted valid. Oh! but!—"Chatterton owns, that he wrote the *first* Battle of Hastings;" oh! but—the Boy likewise prevaricated in that business to Mr. Barrett, no less than as to the "*second number*." Pity, that genius should require "a flapper" of refreshment to a *voluntary*, or other "doze of memory!" "Chatterton moreover owns, that he wrote the account of the ceremonies observed at the opening
of

is knavish! but he forgets himself in persisting to attribute to antiquity "a poem upon the same monarch's expedition to the Holy Land," with a copious reserve of alternate rhymes: this is foolish: "*son metier lui echappa*." After all, I see not any reason why the verse

"Richard of Lion's heart to fight *is* gone," affixes the æra of the composition to the days of Richard the First, or why the eclogue, in which it is inserted, may be thence, or from any part of its subject matter, insisted as a composition of *any specific date*; which may be only conjectured from the application of those, versed in the progress of the English language, to its terms, phrases, descriptions, and to the general conduct of the performance; of those, unwarped alike by prejudice or prepossession. The poet addresses himself *in the person* of Nygell, whose father had joined Richard's expedition; the young man prays in the beginning of the piece for the happy return of his father, which had taken effect and is celebrated in its close.

of the old bridge ;” *was* *be* therefore author of the whole collection attributed to ROWLEY ?” *This account* could not have been otherwise understood, than as “ a copy” of the Boy, not his original invention ; for why on an opposite principle pronounce it the herald stimulating curiosity to enquire after ancient manuscripts in the hands of the same individual ? The erection of the Old Bridge was a distinguished æra in the records of Bristol. Let us hear no farther triumph of petulant sarcasm in “ the story of Old Women” dragged as “ witnesses before a jury !” Our Pamphleteer may be consistently admitted in the former character, but cannot as consistently claim to himself the accuracy of examination requisite to constitute the latter.

We are now advanced to a consideration of the manuscripts themselves, and on this subject also we may ascertain the largest dealer in the “ gratis dicta” of argumentation.* “ It is very difficult,” saith Mr. Bryant, “ to know precisely the æra of a manuscript, especially when of great antiquity” Our Pamphleteer pretends not his capacity to form a conclusive judgment of manuscripts, ’till “ the sixteenth century” towards

* Pamphlet, page 28.

† Ibid, page 29.

wards its close ; from all manuscripts, however, whether “ prior or subsequent,” he offers his assistance “ readily to point out the hand-writing of Queen Elizabeth :” farther, this deponent *insisteth* not. In my conception, the precise date of a manuscript is then alone to be ascertained, when the tenor of language is authenticated to a particular age ; this, while a language continues in its infancy, and variations are slowly made, affixes nearly its date from its distinction of character ; while in a fluctuating situation, and while fresh words are continually imported from other tongues, the gradation of refinement must be tenaciously watched ; and perhaps the surest clue in this stage of a language is colligeable from historical records. The manuscript is congenial with the condition of a tongue, and with the peculiar dialect familiarized more directly to the writer of the manuscript. No proof has been yet submitted, that Chatterton was capable of “ copying the hand-writing of the fifteenth century ;” the reverse is strongly pleaded ; no proof that he possessed a turn for “ drawing and emblazoning ; no proof of any thing throughout the Pamphlet. “ The hand-writing,” continues our Pamphleteer, “ usually found in deeds, is very different from the hand-writing current in the same age, and from that employed in transcribing poems : hence it was, that Chatterton

E never

never produced a parchment so large as a common folio :” a mock parchment, however, we are assured, that the Boy produced of that size to Mr. Ruddall, whose evidence will be considered in the course of these Strictures. Amid the different modes of hand-writing above-mentioned, Chatterton may seem, if we accede to our Pamphleteer’s representation, to have defied all surrounding difficulties. The “ account of the Old Bridge” was *probably* in the current hand-writing of the age, in which it originated; this, however, is by our critic ascribed to Chatterton : the “ Yellow-Roll,” usually attributed to ROWLEY, was as probably in the hand-writing of a *deed*; this likewise is by the same authority ascribed to Chatterton; “ the Poems” attributed likewise to ROWLEY, or to his age, if not written primarily in the “ current hand-writing” of the times in which they were composed, were not, according to the same critic, written in the hand-writing in use for *deeds*;—these Poems we find allotted to the genius of Chatterton! The * laboured story of “ the old crumpled parch-

* Our Pamphleteer refers to the various beautiful manuscripts of Gower and Chaucer, in several public and private libraries. It may be reflected, that he has denied any particular acquaintance with manuscripts, of a date prior to the latter end of the sixteenth century.

“ Whole

parchments, frequently observed to have been placed before" the *Bristol Boy*, serves only to confirm *his* disposition for hypocritical enthusiasm. Why did he not "show the manuscripts, while he was (or pretended to be) transcribing them?" why said he not, "such and such characters denote such and such letters?" why "called he" not "upon those knowing in ancient hands, to bear testimony from their own eyes to the antiquity of all these manuscripts?" He had evidently a design in these concealments, but will they be of service to prove, that he was the real author of the manuscripts? "Characters of imposture are on every part of" Chatterton's allegations, when unsupported by the testimony of others; and if the declaration of his having written the poems "were true" that trueism "would still remain an improbable wonder."* In *one* very reasonable wish the Pamphleteer may be readily joined by the staunch advocates for veracity; a wish to rescue literary traffic from the shackles of a monopoly; but the unpublished situation of *these* manuscripts in an original form may by no means be argued as evidence,

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that

"Whole verses" he maintains (in the cricketers phrase) to have been "trouled off" in these poems from Pope: he is welcome to his ideas of plagiarism so recent!

* Mr. Horace Walpole, from whom the words are quoted by our Pamphleteer for a contrary purpose.

that they have never existed. It were disingenuous to involve characters, appearing in the strict line of integrity, by a censure of combining in a miserable league to deceive and abuse mankind!

“Chatterton’s verses, too smooth and harmonious for antiquity, are moreover too old for the æra, to which they are ascribed;” the language “is the language of two entire centuries:” is the eighteenth century to be affixed as one? here we are supplied with an additional cargo of wonders! with every indulgence of “glossaries, lexicons, provincialities of a northern, *unknown to a southern Englishman*; with words used in a singular sense by our ancient bards, and with “all the stores of the most copious source,” comprehension to so formidable an extent is little reconcilable to the history of his education, the reality of his talents, and the abbreviated period of his existence: he possessed not, moreover, but in a very partial and contracted mode any one of the above subsidiary availments; granting, for the humour of the argument, that he possessed them in the full force assigned, his knowledge would have been thrown away from his vagaries of conduct in the invention of these Poems; why, in the name of consistency, fabricate the parnassian structure of such ill-cohering materials, as to weaken its very basis? Chatterton’s appears to
have

have been a designing ignorance, scarcely attributable to such exalted craftiness; The transcriber may be in fault, but not the original composer, for errors of this motley complexion:

“ Before the Urchin well could go,

“ He stole the whiteness of the snow.”

Thus is our Stripling all-accomplished represented to have mastered, after a dunciad-childhood, the old, and obtained an exceeding familiarity with modern English writers!

“ The Tragedy of *Ælla*” is marked to have originated from “ the *Elfrida* and *Caractacus* of Mr. Mason.” Opinion revolts from the idea of *this* derivative excellence. The

poetry conveys not a characteristic resemblance to the poetry of those dramatic models from Greece; the minstrels may at first sight be presumed counter-parts of the Grecian chorus, but our English traditionary records have a retrospect to the times of

“ *Ælla*; a name,” which our Pamphleteer, loth to lose a sight of prepossession, asserts “ *Chatterton* to have *probably* found from Dr. Percy’s reliques of English poetry.”

That idolatry of hypothesis, which he hath pledged himself to maintain, creates the veneration of a second idol, in a memorial of

“ *Chatterton*’s knowledge of times, of men, and of manners, without which *Ælla* could not have been written.” Is such “ miraculous

lous

lous ingenuity" determinable from the Boy's unquestioned compositions? What a fall is there!

"*The origin of the English drama* is prefaced by our Pamphleteer with Mr. Hawkins's account of "ancient interludes, the earliest of which was composed 1512." Therefore, maintains our critic, "*Ælla* must be pronounced a modern composition;" he means, that it must therefore be Chatterton's. Shakespeare * *about this time* enriched the stage, and has preserved his title to a distinguished character in the drama, even to the present times.

"Ye gods, annihilate both space and time,
"And make one critic happy!" †

"Erroneous

* About the time, it is meant, that our Pamphleteer ascribes to "the Drama," when it is pronounced to have been "wretched stuff," between 1540 and 1570: he may *perhaps* purpose to represent Shakespeare's muse of a modern cast.

† Chatterton is by enthusiasm asserted to have "exhausted the stores" of "ancient and recent English poetry," he must have likewise considerably dealt in investigations of our writers in prose. I see a rock upon which our Pamphleteer has split; his assertion attributes Chatterton's knowledge of "the name of Widdeville" to the source of "Walpole." That gentleman's "catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors" has inserted the name of Widdeville, instead of the usual acceptation Woodville. An instance hath been already adduced, how far the Bristol Boy was really acquainted with Mr. Horace Walpole's writings.

“ Erroneous interpretations have been given by Chatterton,” saith Mr. Bryant, “ of words throughout these Poems; he could not therefore have been the author.” A reasonable deduction, it may be *presumed*! but “ circular proof” is alledged against *that* critic. The Boy, according to our Pamphleteer, “ wrote not the Poems originally in their present form; he, *without doubt*, wrote his verses in plain English, *embroidering*” them himself with “ old words from memory, or from glossaries, and finding, or inventing interpretations and words *without doubt*” the greatest genius that England hath produced since the days of Shakespeare; *nay, much greater* than our great dramatist himself, when even the “ imperfections on his head” are made *solid* supporters of so flattering an encomium! But “ the glossary and the text were not written at the same time;”* thence “ the precise meaning of antiquated words, which he had” himself “ used,” was lost, and his “ confused collection” produced false “ interpretations:” this questioning of Chatterton’s abilities was to be atoned for, and our Pamphleteer instantly supplies an example of the Boy’s *extemporaneous* “ glossary to the English Metamorphosis.” A fine cutting two-edged sword! sharp indeed! his ignorance may carry the tide of argument to his prejudice;

* Pamphlet. Page 42.

dice ; his consummate quickness of conception shall be adduced to the counter balance of applause. That the glossary just referred to evinces superior readiness of talent, may be doubted from the mistakes with which that glossary abounds : after all, will Mr. Barret, at whose desire it was undertaken, and Mr. Tyrerwhit, who assists in the information of the fact, positively convince us, that Chatterton had not studied, or obtained the same glossary to his piece before ? memory may have the appearance of a magician, but can never exceed the knowledge of its possessor : the solution however will not answer in behalf of the Boy's acquirements, or of his claim of authorship to the poems. Heigh Presto in the next paragraph ! " not six false interpretations" are to be found, " of words, which appear, when rightly understood to suit the context, and to convey *a clear meaning*." Wonderful circumspection of phrase, to the honor of the Boy's sagacity in the first, and *no less* wonderful proof of our critic's sagacity in the last expression ! These *perhaps* are amongst the " decisive circumstances," by which the Boy is clearly determined to " have written these Poems !" they may with *the same propriety* be brought in evidence of our Pamphleteer's *assurance*, that he hath not *himself* assumed " the very question in dispute." *

" There

* Pamphlet. Page 43.

"There is often" saith a reprobater of Chatterton, "a material variation between the *copy* and the *original*." "He could," replies his advocate, "have produced variations without end:"—from ignorance or from capacity? Our Pamphleteer argues alternately for the Boy's distinction as to both. The variations in question are verbal; now that the same person should have in form delivered a manuscript under his own hand, with *a word* unknown in the language, and the "*very next day*" have produced a second manuscript of the same poem with the substitution of a different word in the very same passage, carries a strong suspicion of the writer: the Boy, however, exhibited the first *
as

* The verbal variation commented occurs in the Song of Ælla,

— — — "a steed
"I frayning o'er the mead."

Such is the first-delivered manuscript! "yprauncing" was substituted in the second. However "fraine, or frayne," is a Saxon word, "used," saith Junius's Etymologicon, "among the provincials of Lancaster, to express interrogate." The Teutonic "fragen," adduced by Junius under the same article, signifies "to incite, stimulate;" "fraine" seems more primarily derived from the Latin "frænum," a rein. "Yfrayned" is, in my opinion, more expressive than its substitute; it applies to the skill of the rider, commanding the spirit of the horse at will, no less than to the situation of the horse itself.

"Neigheyng to be amenge the poynfelde speeres."

The metre of the Song, from which the above criticism

as a copy, the last as its original. As a complete explanation of this proceeding, our Pamphleteer with complacency assures us, "that all the manuscripts produced by Chatterton were *equally* originals." A question may, for impartiality is to be honoured, be asked of the advocates of ROWLEY on the other hand! Had the Boy copied his *original* with the most finished accuracy, as far as the condition of that original would ensure it, would not his mode of hand-writing have evinced a sufficient variation from that in which the *original* was conveyed? had the same species of hand-writing prevailed in copy and original, would not imposture have been expressly determined against the Boy?-- The *present* enquiry may not be closed without a due tribute to hypothetical enthusiasm: Once plunged into a difficulty, every struggle to emerge more deeply rivets distress: the load of Chatterton's deceit, little requiring an addition, is studiously exaggerated by our Pamphleteer, who asserts him to have "obscured" the last resigned manuscript "to give it an ancient appearance." *Obscurum per Obscurius!* we shall speedily collect the foundation of this sentiment.

" The

cism is deduced, in despite of all attempts to justify a contrary imputation, argues against its authenticity as a composition of ROWLEY's age: but why in course attributable to the Boy of Bristol?

“ The inequality of Chatterton’s *acknowledged* compositions, when compared with those ascribed to ROWLEY, hath been much exaggerated.” *So sings* our Pamphleteer ! “ Some of the Boy’s worst lines” are wantonly, it seems, produced by this friend of learning and of candor : What superior excellence has Chatterton exhibited, from *his own* poems, to that contained in *his* lines brought forward by Mr. Bryant ? It is not the fault of that gentleman, if the “ Bristol ambitious” has evinced his deficiency of grammatical, geographical, and literary erudition in his own language, and an ignorance of every period and climate which he treats : Unhappy, as his disposition, were his attempts to reach reputation. When he frowns in satire, he sluices the frantic torrent of slander ; when he wishes to laugh, he plays the buffoon : eminent examples of “ premature abilities” in *any century*, affixed for their existence ! *

“ Disfigure the ancient English with old spelling.” Spell the poems, ascribed to ROWLEY, as you please ; the veil of antiquity thrown over them on the one hand will not protect them, as labors of the fifteenth century, from the detecting eye of criticism ; nor the display of them in the comely dress of recent language facilitate their ascription

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to

* Pamphlet, page 45.

to the eighteenth century, on the other. He who has violated in his own immediate tongue every point, characteristic of compositions entitled to esteem, may not, without great allowances, (or rather deviations from sound judgment) be ascertained the author of productions in ancient language, which it is the first doubt of an examiner *in this case* that he tolerably understood.

Our answerer calls in an auxiliary, *partial* as himself, to confirm—what? “That genius and abilities may be brought into the world with us, but that nature cannot give a knowledge of the world.”* Yet this auxiliary insults upon Chatterton’s “so astonishing quickness in seizing every thing he chose,” that we may *nearly* ascribe his mental exertions to mere *natural* faculty; for, when this “astonishing quickness” is alledged to have
 distin-

* Pamphlet, page 46. Our Pamphleteer instances, in the foregoing page, the reasonableness of large allowance to the blunders of Chatterton, because a very elaborate and indisputable genius, “Editor of Fletcher’s Plays,” has committed a strange mistake, vindicating the errors of one by those of another, though a total defect of resemblance appears in the persons criticised! stranger still, when proper terms are discarded to make place for others less proper, as not so expressive, by the one, and when the error of the other by no means draws his abilities into question! most strange, that a solitary blunder, *possibly* arising from the former, should be esteemed a suitable comparison for legions, *glaring* from the ignorance of the latter!

distinguished him, he could have experienced next to nothing of "worldly knowledge," the "knowledge of men, of manners, and of things." He remained not a sufficient season in the metropolis for the mastery of this essential quality, and before he went thither a drear vacuity of "worldly knowledge" was his lot; for low artifice is no feature of this enviable acquirement! but our Pamphleteer seems to have adopted so fond a zeal to "be deceived," that he murmurs at a wish to develope the truth! He hath deceived himself by seeking to deceive his reader in the comparison of a Stanza from Chatterton's "Narva and Mored;" that African eclogue is cast into old English, under the title "Chatterton in Masquerade," and the first eclogue ascribed to ROWLEY is delivered in present English.

"The verses he wrote for ROWLEY are *perhaps* better than his others, because they contain the thoughts of our best poets often in their own words?" What?—personating a writer of the fifteenth century the Boy largely borrowed from poets of the eighteenth, but in the verses, which were avowedly his own, he refused to avail himself of their beauties? A Lad of his boasted talents may rather be presumed to have reversed the plan, or to have been a plagiarist on both occasions: his
own

own particular performances stand in great want of such support !

Our Pamphleteer's help-mate upon this last occasion, the contents of whose passage, immediately quoted, subvert one favourite line hazarded by the former, namely the ignorance of Chatterton, is the author of " Love and madness ; a performance, giving rise to an epistle from Mrs. Mary Newton, sister of the Bristol Boy, written professedly "*as to a friend*" of herself and of her family.

" The time was much too short for Chatterton to have been the author of the Poems attributed to ROWLEY ; it would have been still more astonishing," is the reply, " if he had transcribed in the same time the same number of lines in a very ancient hand." He could have written them, that is on the former supposition of our Pamphleteer, " in plain English ; and then have written them over again, as " inventor," with the continual substitution afterwards of old English, in less time than he could have transcribed them, at one exertion, into the latter ! Chatterton's " inventive faculties " must indeed have been in this case as " wonderful," as the argument this moment urged in their behalf on our Pamphleteer's principle ; which inverts the more *obvious* mode of ratiocination. The Boy's " London compositions within the space of four months ? " Will our critic *then* take it
upon

upon himself to avow, that every performance placed to the authorship of Chatterton within the afore-mentioned time, was written in the metropolis, and the positive inventions of the Boy in that abbreviated interval? What were these magical productions? as to the verses,

“ Fanny might spin a thousand such,”—

But they would be fitly inserted in no higher repository, than amongst the farrago of magazines; and, for the prose! miserable political squibs are pitiful, and unavailing passports to genuine literary reputation! I had nearly overlooked the very *judicious* “ verbum verbo” imitation from our great moral periodical essayist in Chatterton’s *novel* work, entitled “ Maria Friendless :” corroborating instance, it must be confessed, of his extreme *inventive* powers! *

“ Manuscripts of the fifteenth century in the Cotton Library are so defaced, that it would take no inconsiderable time to copy a dozen lines!” The condition of manuscripts, even though *precisely written* in the fifteenth century, it will at once occur, may widely differ: we must, to the misfortune of
our

* I am indebted for this remark to Mr. Bryant’s communication through the intelligence of a “ young gentleman of Cambridge,” promising by this earlier effulgence another constellation in the hemisphere of letters. Mr. Bryant’s Observations, vol 2, p. 487—490.

our enquiries, place a principal reliance upon Chatterton's own testimony, when we collect his exceeding assiduity as to several transcriptions " of the Poems attributed to ROWLEY."

" Writings defaced and obliterated in many places" are therefore more difficult to be readily copied; more favorable still to the expansion of the Bristol Boy's abilities. Has our Pamphleteer forgot his late assertion concerning " these defacements, that in some instances," and he seems thence to argue the same in every instance, where such defacements may be observed, the Boy's manuscripts have been " defaced and obliterated" by his own intentional fallacy " to make an appearance of antiquity?" *

" The

* Though I cannot pledge myself to answer for the intellects of " an attorney," yet would I candidly intimate, that " the Solicitor introduced," for the purpose of being ridiculed by our Pamphleteer, page 51, " to the House of Lords," may *perhaps* not be altogether found guilty of unpardonable inaccuracy of expression. " A deed," saith this man of equity, " is illegible, but I will make out a fair copy of it." A deed of ancient date may " *prima facie*" appear illegible, but when examined at leisure, sufficient traces of its intelligibility may be transfused into a copy; however I am aware of the cruelty of depriving a gentleman of his pleasantries! some sweet should by all means be intermixed by way of palatableness to the sour! In conformity with this last principle the Pamphleteer shall be left to enjoy his jocular sarcasm upon

" The miserable shifts, to which * our Pamphleteer is compelled to have recourse, by obliging himself to run full tilt against matter of fact ! " and on not a single fact hath he rested a single argument of his Curfory production. " Chatterton owned he was the author of the " first Battle of Hastings, but we are not to believe his declaration : " † Why should we ? his first denial of it, and his subsequent prevarication upon both the numbers of that battle preclude our too easy faith. Such was his behaviour ; with his *imputed* reasons we have little concern : the Boy " had got into a difficulty, and he avoided to get into a second ; that is, a prior was to be protected by a succeeding fraud. Whether this be a true representation will be most fairly adjudged from his " information *the same day* to Mr. Barrett, that he had *another* Poem, the copy of an original, by ROWLEY." Of *another* number of " the Battle of Hastings," it will scarcely be denied that he meant ; because " at a considerable interval of time, he produced a second number of

upon the *presumed* contents of " Mr. Barrett's History of Bristol." Sarcasms, no doubt, intended to confirm the claim of Chatterton, and eke his own to ingenuity without example, and erudition without end. Pamphlet. Page 60, 61.

* Pamphlet, page 51.

† Dean Milles's and Mr. Bryant's accounts of Chatterton.

of the same poem, much larger than the former." This "considerable time" has been elsewhere called "*some time afterwards.*" The *other* poem we may reflect was asserted "the copy of an original by ROWLEY," the copy which was however, it is said, "*a true original,*" Chatterton is urged by our Pamphleteer to have himself composed, though the Boy delivered it as a mere transcript from ROWLEY. So that the first number of Hastings Battle must, if we accede to the Boy's closing assertion to Mr. Barrett, be set down as his own performance; and the second number as the labor of ROWLEY from Turgott. Yet "he who wrote the one" is insisted by our Pamphleteer "to have written the other." Mr. Barrett was left by the deceitful Urchin to correct the impression made upon him, concerning the authorship of the former number, by examining whether such a similarity prevailed in the second, as to induce his application of this last to the composer of the first. Who will from this picture of fallacy in the Lad entertain an idea, on *his* testimony, or on the conclusion adduced from his defender's premises, that "he was author of all the poems ascribed to ROWLEY?"

"We have the positive testimony of Mr. John Ruddall, concerning the reality of a forgery by Chatterton." It hath been already pronounced, that the Boy cannot without violence

violence to reason be conjectured to have invented "the account of ceremonies observed at the opening of the Old Bridge at Bristol;" he could but have copied it from some ancient memorial of that event. On what other construction can the general curiosity have been roused, from the publication of this account, to an enquiry after ancient manuscripts in the possession of the publisher? The Boy "*soon after* the appearance of this account told Mr. Ruddall, that he was the author:" *vix crederem, etiam si jurasset!*

"On an half sheet of *fools cap* parchment Mr. Ruddall saw Chatterton write several words, *if not lines*, in a *character* which he (Mr. Ruddall) did not understand; but says, that it was totally unlike English; that when Chatterton had so written upon the parchment, he held it over the candle *to give it the appearance of antiquity*, which changed the colour of the ink, and made the parchment appear black *and a little contracted*. Chatterton acknowledged to Mr. Ruddall his forgery of the account, &c. conjuring him *not* to reveal the secret."

To positive affirmations, but not to the constructive deductions of Mr. Ruddall, I would be understood to discharge all the respect, which his warmest advocates would desire, and his own character may demand. Mr. Ruddall saw the Boy write several words,

if not *lines*, on a parchment of particular size; he knows not a syllable of their contents, or meaning; but “ they were totally unlike English.” The proof that they were old English rests therefore on the veracity of Chatterton, at this very moment in the practice of a fraud. Mr. Ruddall, it must be granted, who “ continued his visit” to the Boy “ for three quarters of an hour,” may be concluded to have had sufficient time for an examination into the *characters* of the parchment; and the manuscript Poems attributed to ROWLEY, tho’ copiously interlarded with the ancient, furnish specimens enough of modern English, by which a gentleman of no refined intelligence might have form’d a judgment, that English was the language proposed to be described by the writer. Mr. Ruddall’s curiosity seems not to have been fully awake, when we consider the plea, which he is contended to submit, of his own unequivocal inexperience in the character of the words, *or lines*, written by the Boy. “ He” (the latter) “ afterwards held the parchment over the candle, to give it the appearance of antiquity.” This last intimation proceeded visibly from Chatterton, it may not be attributed to Mr. Ruddall’s own knowledge of the consequence to ensue. “ This appearance” was to be ascertained by “ a change in the colour of the ink;” to what different colour

colour from its former was the ink metamorphosed? *perhaps* the reverse of Ovid's mulberries, originally black, it became altered to white by this manœuvre:

"Or like a lobster boil'd, the * *horn*

"From black to *red* might *chance* to turn."

"The parchment appeared black, and *a little contracted*;" *perfectly* resembling the contraction of antiquity? Soft and soothing *Bathos*! Such is the evidence brought into the court of solid criticism, "decisively" to evince the capacity of the Bristol Boy "to imitate English hand-writing!"—What is the reason alledged in our Observer's Pamphlet, why the Boy "brings before Mr. Ruddall" the "fools-cap parchment, writes words, *if not lines*, upon it, and holds it to the candle?"—

Put in the light, and then—put in the light. †

"It occurring to Chatterton, that he might be called upon to produce the original, after he had avowed the forgery to Mr. Ruddall," he endeavours to shelter his fraud under repetitions of duplicity. In this whole testimony we have no confirmation, that the Boy possessed abilities to copy the old English; if the *opposite* construction is not suitably indulged, a surmise may be at least insinuated, that yet another fallacy is imputeable

* Ink horn.

† Shakespeare.

imputeable in this business to Chatterton. Mr. Ruddall might have satisfied himself, upon examination, that some of the words, written by the Boy, were absolutely English, an examination *very probably* not wished, or suffered by the latter

Well! “but,” we are told, that the contraction of parchment is no discriminating mark of antiquity, the blackness given by smoke is very different upon trial from the* yellow tinge, which parchment acquires by age, and the “ink does not change its colour;” I conclude it to be understood, when “held over the candle.” What reply, Mr. Pamphleteer?—“So! because these † arts are not always compleatly successful”—but these arts are actually asserted *never to promise* success in the nature of things. Why Chatterton “did this,” or why Chatterton “did that,” our Pamphleteer may “weary himself with conjectures;” from Mr. Ruddall’s evidence we are not furnished with authority, that “a *skilful antiquarian*, or even a careless observer, professedly not of *that* description, could be deceived by this species of imposture.

It

* Which the “*Yellow-Roll*,” acquired by age; the above passages, “*inter cuncos*,” are *quoted* by our Pamphleteer. Pamphlet, page 55.

† Id. et pag. eadem.

It has been whispered, that some “knowing one” in the b sinefs of thefe manuscripts continues comfortably feated on velvet in a corner; who furrounded with a confused din of facts, allegations, furmifes, and deductions

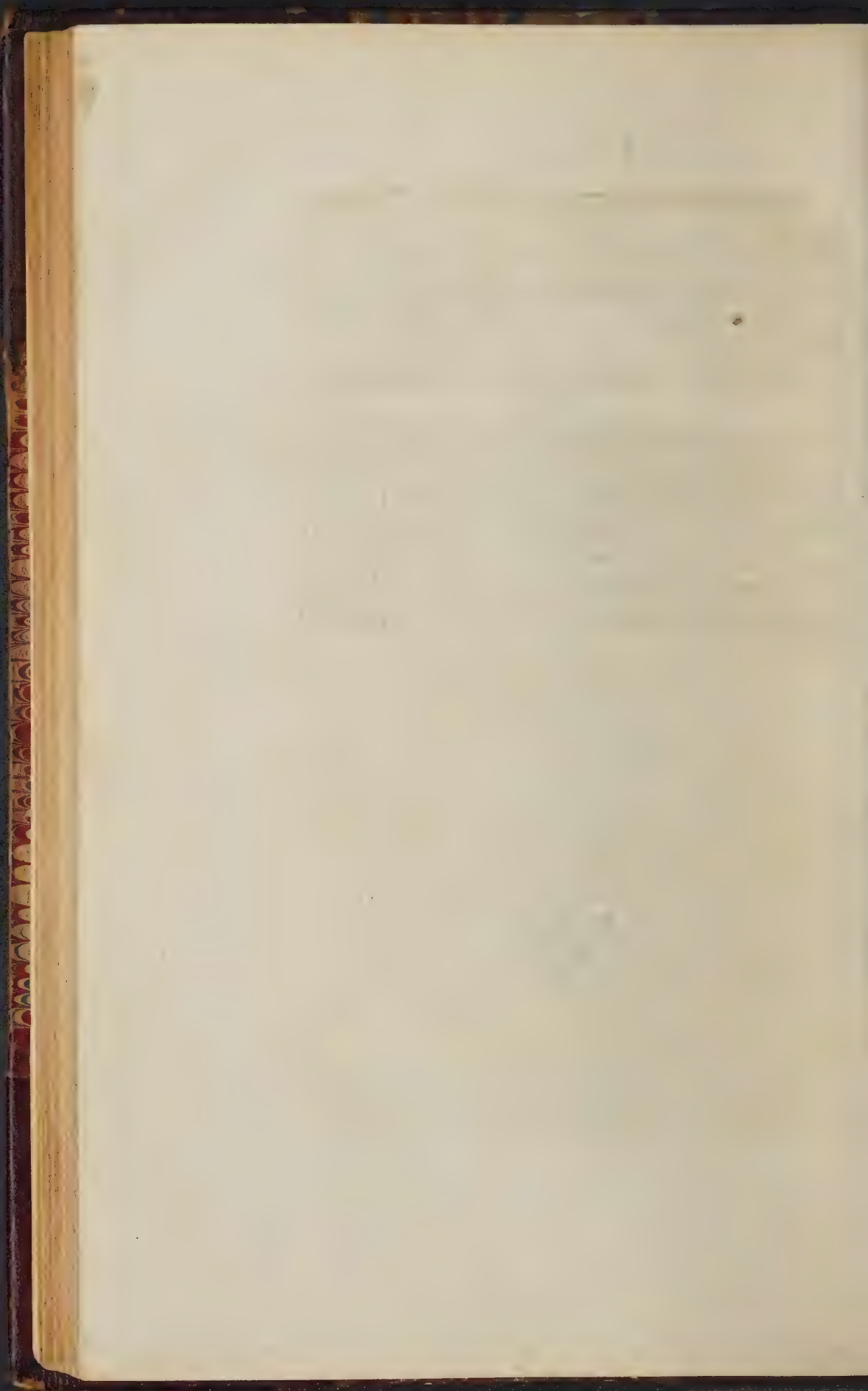
“Smiles in the whirlwind, and enjoys the ftorm.”

In a convenient feafon after thefe “equinoctial gales” are fubfided, and a “fettled calm” prevails, this perfonage may ftet forth arrayed in the majetty of conviction, and the whole ftructure of circumftantial criticism be diffolved, as Spencer’s fafe Florimel of fnow, when the true one appeared in fight. *

* Dryden.



POSTSCRIPT.



Postscript.

—*Demo unum, Demo et item unum.*

HOR. EPIST.

“AN Enquiry into the authenticity of Rowley’s Poems” has been offered to the public since the close of the foregoing “Strictures;” its author is distinguished by peculiar eminence in poetical discussions; reprobatng the idea, that the manuscripts, usually ascribed to Rowley, have been consistently so esteemed, he directly attributes them to Chatterton. Mr. Warton’s first object of attention is thus indulged; “if these Poems,” saith that learned writer, “are referred to the æra of Edward the fourth, the progressive improvement of poetical composition in the points of taste, style, and language, will be effectually disarranged”.*

A sentiment derived from that authority, which I conceive our Enquirer to respect, immediately occurs: “after Lydgate, who merited more from his language, than his imagination, came Hardyng, who wrote a Chronicle

* Enquiry, Page 8.

Chronicle in verse of the English kings down to Edward the fourth, in whose reign he lived: but the poet is lost in the historian.* So frigid and prosaic a performance, after such promising improvements, seemed to indicate, that poetry was relapsing into its primitive barbarism, and that the rudeness of Robert of Gloucester would be soon reinitiated in the place of Chaucer's judgment and imagination."

I would request to dwell a little upon the foregoing observation; poetical character must have been necessarily deficient, when a "Chronicle in verse" could be admitted as a sacrifice to the muses: difficult it cannot fail to be experienced to clothe the precision of records in the elegance of harmony, however assisted by the enthusiasm of fanciful traditions, those wild exaggerations of nature occasionally blended with the faithfulness of history. How difficult, even when poetry has received refinement the title of "Gazette in Rime" affixed to Mr. Addison's campaign is sufficient to evince; † and as to the degeneracy above remarked to have taken place between the writings of Lydgate, and of Chaucer, in-

stantaneous

* Mr. Thomas Warton's observations on the Fairy Queen. Vol. ii. page 104, 105.

† Mr. Joseph Warton's Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope. Vol. i.

stantaneous as the exchange to corrector of language, reflection on the last affords a proof, that not a gradual step, but an extensive stride was made by the efforts of genius, which the condition of our language, apparently unfavorable, has been found capable to maintain.

Consistently to treat the subject of the Poems ascribed to Rowley, criticism must affix certain data, as grounds upon which argument may proceed. Evidence arising from the history of the parties should be either specifically admitted, or specifically rejected: where historical anecdotes are granted as authentic, deductions may not unreasonably be hazarded from collateral circumstances. If, for instance, the name of Rowley be conclusively ascertained, and history confirms the existence of such a character in the age, to which he is assigned, still is it requisite, that his talents as a writer be evinced. Should such acquirements be allowed, the nature, and subjects of his compositions should be procured; and the proof of their originality may not unsafely rest upon the performances, in a similar line, handed down, or recorded from the century, in which he lived. A wide extended field, where the *game* springs in too bewildering a way to secure the *sport* of a literary Nimrod; for if some of these productions remain, not few may

have been consigned to oblivion; and as so essential a *variation* hath been alledged in the *compass* of English poetry from the recent mention of “ Lydgate, Hardyng, and Chaucer,” why not apprehend the probability of strong deviation between the writer of these Poems, and others of his particular age? Poetry received a second almost instantaneous expansion in the labors of Spencer; an author, who familiarly conducts us to “ our enquirer’s” argument of personification * dawning in Chaucer, and brought to its meridian by Eliza’s bard. This personal application to the virtues and to the vices formed excellent coloring to a picture of morality; why then should congenial attributions to “ freedom, affright, power, war, and envy” in the boasted Minstrell Song of Goddwyn, be referred to a *recent* period? “ but these are delineated upon too large a scale for the simplicity of a remoter æra;” surely not a larger than that, on which the figurative embellishments of the “ Fairy Queen” are arranged! The Grecian chorus seems in truth too familiarly placed as the original of the English Minstrelsy; that this chorus was known in the days of Rowley may be greatly questioned, but Minstrel Songs were very naturally adopted into English compositions. Attendants on the active
and

* Enquiry, page 14.

and more relaxed moments of superiors, records delivered by the untutored music of their "sweet sounds" were congenial with the credulity, and flattering to the ambition of a warlike people. On the obliging favor communicated by Mr. Mason to the world, in "his dramas from the Grecian model," Chatterton's claim to the Songs of Minstrelsy in *Ælla* and in *Goddwyn* solely depends; a thread of too fine a texture to support the weight which it suspends! The Boy's "pretensions, however, to "a knowledge of antiquity" may by no means be esteemed "endangered by the excellence of the poetry," unequivocally "his own!"

"Old English poetry is a continued tenor of disparity,* not so much in the style as in the sentiment, while these poems have neither imbecilities of thought or diction." Our enquirer hath concluded it not inconsistent to moderate this compliment of zeal in the progress of his remarks, by an admission, that the author's "imagination is not always just, that absurdities" are obvious, and his poetry sometimes weaved "in a trite tissue:" but what avails argument upon the occasion? Chatterton's very blemishes are charged upon his opponents as substantial causes, why compositions, highly valued by those, who urge
the

* Enquiry, page 17.

the fact, fell from his prolific genius. Prodigy of parts ! the idol, yet the sport of nature ! not only, like Dryden's Zimri, " the epitome of all mankind," but more ; though a Boy incontrovertibly dull till near the time he quitted school if a mother's evidence be credited, and *indulged* to the world, only *till* he became eighteen. " Too * good a poet" on one hand, " with a mediocrity of talents" on the other ; and while *ever* " contriving some plan, by which his darling ambition was meant to be gratified, " found to have at bottom no contrivance ! "

Thus whimsically circumstanced, Chatterton is resolved into " author of the collection," by that mode of argumentation most effectually tending to a defeat of his expectations. " Heterogeneous mixtures," and " incongruous combinations" abound in ancient English poetry ; are the poems attributed to ROWLEY, are any efforts of human abilities, of *superhuman* in the character of the Bristol Boy, untainted with these errors of overflowing imagination ? errors, which are frequently applicable to the manner, are as immediately chargeable upon the matter occasionally introduced " into the poems ascribed to ROWLEY." With the authorities of Gower and of Lydgate the enquirer hath
contented

* Ibid, page 20.

contented himself in his foregoing accusation of our older bards ; their eccentric failies are not so visibly intermixed in the humorous productions of Chaucer, nor fully they the more elegant harmony of chaste description in Spencer. Contracted situation served to narrow the minds of cloystered penmen ; and as their religion was a tyranny of superstition, so their monkish writings originating in the frenzy of enthusiastic devotion were marked with harsher features of discordancy. Heathen mythology goes hand in hand with Popish legends ; when a poem inserts the latter in their sole rational acceptation of traditionary fables, the critic may be satisfied, that the muse hath been released from the monastery into life.

“ Verbal particularities” * may not be strenuously insisted upon : which shall be imputed to the inventor, which to the transcriber ? Ancient manuscripts copied by a modern, unless a full competency of comprehension is his happier portion, will necessarily receive a tincture of modern terms : defect of understanding leads to conjecture, and where the unknowing conjectures, he is too liable to be lost ; in the instant, that attention is warp'd from a direct view of the old, it revolts to present language. Verbal insertions,
however,

* Enquiry, page 23.

however, in compositions truly ancient, may not unfrequently possess an appearance of later periods; and candor induces me to attest, that, even concealed as he is behind the rug of antique phraseology, and a furtout of "black letter," many verses of humorous Geoffrey, who rescued our poetry, and our manners from the barbarism of ecclesiastical cells, struck me at first sight with their *recent* orthography; even *the run of others* distinguishes them with a cast of modernism; a modernism extensible to our enquirer's next deduction "from entire lines and prolix paragraphs;" * the production of which may create a suspicion, where assertion should be suspended, that a composition ascribed to antiquity may be esteemed the reverse. And here stop we a moment to pay a tribute justly due to the accurate arrangement of venerable "balades" by the ingenious Percy; from these, ancient versification, no less than ancient phraseology, if stripped of their weeds, and decorated with the finery of modern "apparamentes," would be experienced to flow "smooth as the smoothest stream," smooth as the melody of Pope; how numerous those specimens of harmony, which boast an æra less modern than, at least equal to, the fifteenth century! where subjects are derived
from

* Enquiry, page 23.

from the source of nature, language lends her most soothing powers to convey its dictates to the heart. "Contente" * is stiled

"Mayde of the turtle eyne ;"

This characteristic epithet familiarizes us at latest to the days of Spencer, and the "eye of the turtle" may more particularly be questioned on the conclusion of modernism, when we refer to that exquisite sentence of oriental melody, so admirably transfused from the Psalmist into our version, "Oh ! deliver not the soul of thy *turtle dove* into the hands of his enemies !" why † truth should not be esteemed suitably complimented in older days, under the character of "faire saincte," I cannot conjecture ; neither indeed is it reasonable, that a moral quality, so exalted as truth, should endure a refusal of such title, bestowed every hour by popish artifice and absurdity upon beings, which either never existed, or existed to the disgrace of society : if, however, the saintship be with some impropriety thus applied in the fifteenth, truth may surely be allowed to have been consistently so gifted long before the eighteenth century. ‡

"Metre"

* Enquiry, page 30.

† Ibid, page 30.

‡ Native asperities," say the advocates of ROWLEY, "have been softened by a modern corrector;" if this
corrector

“Metre” is our Enquirer’s second consideration; pindaricks involved by a wild luxuriance in paraphrases or imitations, for they are not translations less early than the attempts from “the Bard of Thebes,” call them what you will, by Cowley, may be negatived as productions of “the fifteenth century;” in which such a writer seems not to have been heard of by the English: on the other hand, because “the thing, which we call an ode,” and which in modern estimation seems little to argue *determined* composition, subsisted not from Grecian authority in those ancient days, shall we thence conclude that *description*, evidently brought into poetic life previously to the æra ascribed to ROWLEY, was not thrown into a lyric form? The truth is, that odes, call them balads, call them songs, call them poems, without the metre of *heroick* complection, displayed the lyric spirit in very early times. Metre must
speak

corrector is set down as Chatterton, we may reflect, that these same gentlemen have found him guilty of adding by his ignorance to the asperities inherent in the text, according to its general tenor: instead of correcting he must rather be understood to have corrupted his original; for the “filk” of Spencer himself darned by

“Chatterton’s officious aid,” quickly discovers the thread employed in the repair to be “worsted.” Enquiry, page 32.

The above remark bears still more effectually against the originality of Chatterton.

speak for itself in the species of composition
 now remarked, and on this many assertions
 may be made, though few, if any, are to be
 proved, against its existence in days remote
 from those of Chatterton. "If ROWLEY,"
 saith our Enquirer, "was acquainted with
 Pindar, he has borrowed nothing from
 the Theban bard, but the licentious exube-
 rancy of his lyrics;" that is, as an experi-
 ence of Pindar will most consistently evince,
 nothing actually possessed by his genius, if
 we may judge from his surviving odes; but
 was Chatterton a Pindar?—as greatly as he
 was a Mason. The metre of "the Song of
 Ælla" is wild, the thoughts by no means
 centered, and the close abhorrent from
 every idea of connection; the whole last
 Stanza jejune and spiritless; little arguing
 the feelings of Chatterton, who had strongly
 worked himself into habits of abuse against
 Bristol, and its parsimonious rewarders of
assumed merit.

As uniform regularity, and metrical dig-
 nity have been adjudged to the author of
 these Poems by the advocates of Chatterton,
 he may with less propriety be allowed to have
 indulged "dancing vagaries." Majestick as
 his usual tread in "the buskins and the
 greaves," an author may choose sometimes
 to laugh, or be pleasant in "the tragick,"
 or the epick. Here our Enquirer rebukes the

metrical *exchange* alone. "Double rhimes" are particular objects of censure, as arguing modernism of date. In Chaucer what is pronounced "*accidental*" is attributed, as to the author of these Poems, to *design*. The occasion of * our Enquirer's criticism is, "a Minstrel Song," ascribed to Sir Thybbotte Gorges," certainly conveyed in a measure essentially varying from the residue of the composition, into which it is inserted: others are left to consider, whether it is *hitched* into the performance: at any rate, † generally argued, the "double rhimes" employed by an earlier poet justify its less modern construction, as *metrical originality* may not in this instance be alledged. It may appear a subject mete for surprise, that "our Enquirer" hath not rather adverted to the authority of this same Chaucer on the present occasion in favor of Chatterton's right to these Poems, since he adduces in the course of his remarks "Speight's Glossary of that Poet,"

* Enquiry, page 37.

† I would request permission to quote a *Stanza* in the "Minstrel Song of Ælla," which I have already criticised as to a portion of its contents:

"As Elynoure bie the grene lessele was syttyng,

"As from the sone's heat she tarried;

"She sayde, as her whyte hondes whyte hosen were knyttynge,

"Whatte pleasure ytte ys to be married!"

Poet," as the Boy's principal resource in *his study* of ancient English.

The "structure of the Stanza" might have been originally derived from Lydgate, whose lines in the following quotation, however hobbling, may be pronounced to convey a careless facility, suitable to the unadorned period in which he lived :

" I mean as thus, I have no fresh licoure
 " Out of the conduites of Calliope,
 " Nor for Clio of Rhetoricke no stoure
 " In mie labor for to refreshe me."

Why should not "the Minstrel Song in Ælla" have been an invention almost as early as the well known original of "Henry and Emma?"

"Polysyllabick terminations" of verses were a characteristic fault of the "ancient poetry;" a sentiment imputed to Chaucer's practise of "Latin and exotic terms;" till the days of that "Father of English poetry," monosyllables "froze the genial current" of our language. Why must the author, or rather authors of these Poems, be excluded from "verbal imitation" of bards, preceding the age of Chaucer? and for the more tuneful melody of verse be indebted to improvements more recent, and to his or their own excellence of taste? "Polysyllabick closes" are too liable to cast an air of debility on lines,
 though

though they may not be deemed untowardly defective in musical tone.* The polysyllabick termination is likewise in a degree attributed to "Italian importations;" these certainly must be understood to have refined the sounds of the English voice, one vowel familiarly opening upon another to soften words of this prolix construction: be that as it may, our "old new epic pastoral" writer uniformly almost rejects this "heavy cavalry" of terms; and why not, though its use continued to the period of "Fairfax?" a critic, who insists not the origin of these Poems to have taken place in "the fifteenth century," needs not to be solicitous for the subsistence of polysyllabicks in days less ancient than that æra; the last remains of their appearance in English poetry may be fixed even to a more recent time than that of Fairfax: it is evident after all, that Spencer's application to such closes of his lines arose not from any idea of their utility in point of modulation; neither may they be construed characteristicks of his muse; they seem to have been intentional sacrifices to his predecessor Chaucer, but sensible as his knowledge of harmony had made him, that polysyllabick appropriations were very liable to obstruct it, he hath banished from "the slow length of words"

* Enquiry, page 39.

words" every coarser consonant, and thrown *them* as much as possible into vowels. Tho' the metre of "Robert of Gloucester," a bard, or, as our Enquirer prefers, a versifier of the eleventh century at its beginning, pretends to no elegance, yet his selection of words to the immediate structure of his verse, in many instances, diverts that harshness, which in a language "abounding," as an eminent judge and example of poetry has announced, "too much in monosyllables, is apt to prevail: the metre "of Robert" was the vice of his age; and his rudeness is not imputable to his *syllabick confinement*. "Ancient language" is our Enquirer's third consideration; and can he, *qualified* to write the Poems, be concluded to have arrayed his muse in the motley vestments of an harlequin? As a transcriber, his errors of gross contexture may be accounted for, but to cover the gold of a fifteenth century with the cobwebs of a thirteenth was ill-suited to resources necessarily possessed by a real author of the collection: his precedents for words never held in use; "his indiscriminate haste, ignorance of dialect," and factitiousness of diction are so many direct confirmations not in di favor of his transcription, but greatly of a probability, (shall I be admitted to urge possibility?) of his authorship.

In

In Chatterton's "want of knowledge, as to the antiquity of words," our * Enquirer agrees with Mr. Bryant, yet submits very different principles for that deficiency: ignorance may be alledged a more satisfactory shelter for the character of a copyist, than for that of an inventor: yet system is a mere cudgel-play of argument; much may be plausibly warded in its defence, and many blows may be aimed on the contrary to its destruction. Our Enquirer's reasoning on *this head* contains the following propositions: That a "literary forger," with more difficulty to be detected, should never know the meaning of the author forged;" that he should be unskilled in the application of words, which he "finds it requisite to adopt in support of his forgery;" that his "natural expression should be obstructed: that he should be obliged to embarrass a meaning at first clear, and puzzle himself and his readers." These conclusions naturally spring from our Enquirer's premises, unless it be insisted by a mode of proof, whimsical as was the Boy himself, that he purposed to promote detection, while he was designing a fraud. When the "experimental verses," which formed the outset of his fallacious career, were adjudged no originals, the Boy awhile resigned himself to the practice

* Enquiry, page 46.

practice of the like conduct among Bristol friends, which was not endured in the more impartial metropolis; his next gradation was to deceive as a copyist, in turn resuming his claim to originality, as to "the Poems ascribed to ROWLEY." It may "be observed by way of close to this article of enquiry, that the instance * of "master ordering scholar to bring an exercise in Chaucer's style" bears hard against the consistency of master, if scholar was confessedly incompetent in point of experience in "the old English;" but that experience once known by master, and "the exercise delivered by scholar," if the latter could not explain it, would not the former very reasonably doubt, that it was his scholar's composition? Where system is not placed as a stumbling-block in his way, an answerer, justifying the pædagogues, must resolve the question in the affirmative.

Our Enquirer's fourth head comprizes "historical allusions:" the following remarks may suffice on this subject: "the raven standard of the Danes! how," it hath been asked, "could Chatterton have gained any knowledge of it?" I am afraid, that the
answer,

* Enquiry, page 60; Mr. Bryant urges, that "if a boy produces a reputable exercise, and cannot construe it, there is not an usher in a boarding school but will tell him he did not make it."

answer, expressing his intelligence to have been derived from "Thomson's Masque of Alfred," will be reasonably esteemed *presumptive*! why not rather conclude the Poet, if really attributed to the eighteenth century, to have rummaged, *like his beloved Shakspeare*, the refuse of less valued, or never valued, books, for poetical materials? Ample authorities of very early date may be collected for the instruction of a poet in the fifteenth, or any other century before the tardy progress of the eighteenth, in the point of the Danish standard." When the same "moral writer of the Seasons" introduces the name of "Hubba, as a Danish prince," and this is chang'd into Hurra, the warmest advocate for the change cannot pretend to account for the reason, by adjudging the Bristol Boy a *reader* of Thompson to such extent, that plagiarisms may be announced from that quarter: Chatterton would be the very first person to whom *such* perverseness of critical erudition hath been applied! Though the Boy be not admitted to have discovered original poetry in "the Tower of Redcliffe Church, Bristol," yet is it granted, that he "might have there discovered parchments of" humble "prose,* relative to the antiquities of that church, and other buildings of the town:" but whence the
the

* Enquiry, page 65.

the propriety of assigning the Boy's invention to the former, and his mere transcription to the latter? "the prose antiquities have," it seems, "been verified!" the poetical have been so unfortunate as to continue unauthenticated. Is this the foundation of their being attributed to the fancy of the Bristol enthusiast? On a view of this *argument*, as connected with his history, and with many circumstances of "positive evidence," nor less, when considered from its own separate validity, the very reverse seems strongly to be implied.

"Incidental circumstances * in the Battle of Hastings could not have been derived by Chatterton, to whom the books were not accessible, from conformable representations in William of Malmesbury, and the old Latin chroniclers." A deduction with equal consistency referred to Chatterton's incapacity of understanding them, had he possessed such access. "These incidental circumstances" our Enquirer insists to have "descended into later historians, particularly Hollingshed, Fox, and Stowe, to which Chatterton got access. Fuller, "the church historian," is moreover alledged as his direction; † and, if used by the Boy, may be esteemed a source of supererogatory intelligence, "all the rolls and catalogues from the three foregoing writers

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ters

* Enquiry, page 67.

† Ibid, page 71.

ters having been drawn together, and comparatively arranged by the *last* elaborate pen. As we have already observed in what sense of the term Chatterton has been stiled a *reader* of Thompson, it may be more familiarly collected that he was probably in the same degree a reader of the above *extensive* historians. The time he existed

("Hunc tantum terris ostendunt fata" may be a characteristick motto for our literary Marcellus) *most satisfactorily* accounts for his acquirement of knowledge ecclesiastical and civil, for his compositions poetical and profaick, and his acquaintance from parchments with Bristol anecdotes and events, which it is *not sufficient* objection to *prove*, that he could scarcely understand! That the early period of "the English chroniclers" adduced, should be urged, as a convincing reason, why "the Battle of Hastings" was not composed 'till the eighteenth century, claims *as solid* a right to our persuasion.

"Turgott," saith Dean Milles, "pointed out in the Battle of Hastings the origin, and use of Stone-henge: this pile of stones hath been the foundation of romantic structures" at least! The lines concerning it run thus:

Neither

"Herewarde, borne on Sarim's spreddynge plaine,
 "Where Thor's fam'd temple manie ages stode;
 "Where Druids, aunciente preefts, did rytes ordaine,
 "And in the middle shede the vyctyme's bloude,
 "Where aunciente bardy dyd their verses synge
 "Of Cæsar conquerde, and hys myghtie hoste;"

“ Neither the birth, nor any part of Herewarde’s History,” saith Dean Milles, “ comes authenticated by other writers, or agrees with the account of that Herewarde, highly celebrated by Ingulfus and other historians :” but a poet, versed in English history, who was at the same time skilled in the conduct of ancient epick poetry as a scholar, may readily be imagined to have substituted additions to a character of *Saxon* origin, in favor of some patron, or friend, whom he was zealous to applaud. Thus the physician of Æneas was no other than the physician of Augustus; the Mnestheus, a complimentary source of the Memmian family, and Achates the true Mæcenas of Virgil’s days. The description of “ Stone-henge” is agreeable to traditionary fable; the idea of a druidical temple was flattering to the vanity of those, who descended from the ancient Britons; here genuine history seems reversed, for, if resolved into an edifice, Stonehenge may be rather presumed a temple raised by Roman ostentation; from the preservation of their “ superstition,” the maintenance of their “ authority” was secured. Monuments of their devout enthusiasm were left in every portion of the globe, traversed by their arms, as monuments of their conquests: such extensive reliques little evince a structure by the hands of barbarism: the tale of its
erection

erection, as a perpetuation of Hengist's massacre, was a sacrifice and no more to popular antipathy against the Danes. But the reader may have been too long detained from the great principle of Chatterton's claim! "Of the Normans the Boy had a list of eight hundred, of the Saxons he took *only twenty* : but why the Boy? the disparity of names inserted in "the Battle of Hastings" might have arisen from a mere disposition of the Poet (and the political distinction of Norman and Saxon had *not* evaporated till after the *Scot* assumed the throne of England!) to picture the Normans profusely destroyed by an handful of Saxons. The adoption of Saxon interests by our Bristol Boy may not be justified from the experience, that when distinctions have been blown away by the breath of time, he who *reads* an historical record of national, civil, or individual enmity, feels a warp to the espousal of one party, of whom he uniformly wishes the success. The Boy is, however, announced to have "taken his few Saxon names" from plays, novels, histories, and other books of entertainment;"* some of the *seventy*, which he assured his particular friends, that he had *investigated*, though the publick hath not yet been favored with *their list*; Shakespeare's
true

* Enquiry, page 72.

true source of information, which, it has been expected, we should see transferred to Chatterton! why not many Norman names from the same *entertaining* origin? — but I recollect, that he was happy in “other *domesday* books” to *consult* for the latter!

The “necromancy of Tynian, the goats of Conyan made tame, the souls of the fairy-stricken people, wandering to Offa’s dyke, are occult intelligences sprung from Chatterton’s imagination.” * Surely not Tynian, for “he is mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth;” a retailer of fabulous absurdities with a seeming fullness of belief in their contents. “Fairy-stricken people are even now remembered;” for these the Boy was assuredly indebted to “Mother Goose’s Tales,” or to the crazy tales of her legitimate descendant “Ossian the Son of Fin-gal.” Our Enquirer proceeds; “these fictions could not have fallen from an archdeacon, a prior of an episcopal church, and a conscientious annalist, or have been introduced into the grave dignity of an historical detail:” these details it is the province of an epick poet to season with fancy; Turgott is out of the question, but let any “archdeacon, bishop, or conscientious” man sit down to write; or if too *solemnly* disposed for writing, be *pre-vailed*

* Enquiry, page 74.

vailed upon to read an epick poem, and he will acknowledge fiction to be its very soul ; it must not indeed be indulged to the violation of events universally received into the world, and with this exception he may not place fabulous representation to the disparagement of its writer's " conscience," or consistency, or even of his more serious reflection, in which he must largely deal in proof of his title to the epick character. Fiction is inherent in the genius of this composition, as a species of episode in itself ; and the poet of " the Battle of Hastings" treads too securely over this enchanted ground, thinly scattered with the ashes of antiquity, to promote an opinion, that it is the walk of a master " in his teens."

But the " Battle of Hastings" is more specifically an object of " our Enquirer's" meditation in his *fifth* range of argument : imitation is its corner stone. The possible acquaintance of ROWLEY with Homer's Iliad is certainly of " questionable shape ;" and it is observed, that the " prolix circumstantial comparison existed not 'till the days of Spenser ;" nor may it be denied an ornament to poetry constituted upon principles of elegance more refined.

" Chatterton had access to English translations of Homer ;" so that critics are not absolutely

absolutely condemned, who have argued imitations from that exalted authority of Greece in the poem of Hastings. "Kenelwalchae's beauty" hath supplied inundations of "families," and these argue "a Boy fond of the florid and the descriptive, unable to check his fanciful career:" numerous the families, but no boyish incoherence, no luxuriance of unbridled imagination struck me, as I perused them: Spencer traffics in these graceful prolixities; * why then attribute them to the wantonness of a *trifler's* muse? the regularity and decorum, marked in this poetic range, would by *such* have surely been removed for the disturbed affectation of metaphorical mixtures! Want of gallantry in monastic ranks is but an inconclusive plea for commanding the hazardous *leap* of a writer at once from "the fifteenth to the eighteenth century!"

The "Tragedy of *Ælla*" remains to be considered on this head of "our Enquirer's" work; this the most valuable composition of the Poems, ascribed to ROWLEY, would be no disgrace to the best collection. "The fable is opened, and the catastrophe produced according to the prescriptions of Aristotelian severity." Of this performance less genuine information through the channel of Chatterton's history may be obtained, than of almost, if not altogether, any other: this
regularity

* Enquiry, page 79.

regularity of the Poem is adduced “ against the probability, that it was written by ROWLEY ;” an opinion justified from anecdotes of our ancient stage. Shakespeare’s undeviating conformity with *Grecian* dramattick hypercriticism may not be pretended, yet “ the miserable interludes” of his own century exist not in his distinguished pages. Insufficiencies of Chatterton have been insisted upon, as foundations for his claim of authorship as to the other Poems; his extreme sufficiency is urged by his advocates for his title to the “ Tragedy of *Ælla*.” Totally unacquainted with the school of Greece, the genius of *Mr. Mason* stands forth his protector, contented with a *rival* in a froward Boy of sixteen, *where* he has himself raised altars to his own immortality. Magical powers of contrast, when will your wonders cease? Not a compliment to poetick eminence of acquisition alone, its enlargement rises to “ judicious criticism and pleasant raillery, in neither of which is he inferior to Pope.” The “ Dean of Exeter” had alledged such specimens of ROWLEY’s abilities in the Epistle to Canynge:” an “ unlucky concession,” saith our Enquirer; “ unlucky” enough in a respect which he did not propose, for Pope is not to be regarded as a man of “ pleasant raillery;” neither is the distinction applicable to “ the worst natured muse” of the Bristol Boy; to whom, if “ judicious criticism” is seriously ascribed as a possession, his own unquestioned perform-

performances furnish ample matter, upon which the exercise of *that* talent might have been copiously bestowed. Little stress may be laid on Chatterton's *imputed* dissoluteness of manners, to evince his defect of title to a Poem, in which lessons of morality occur; they who *act* upon wrong principles have a capacity to *think* upon right; and a critick is very liable to be deceived, who argues the character of the man from the conduct of the writer. *Vice* and *virtue*, if placed to ponderate each other in the scales of Chatterton's true disposition, may be concluded alternately to sink, and alternately to "kick the beam," as the wild sallies of ambitious temper added to, or diminished *their* weight. He was certainly not *vicious* with deliberation, and from deliberation I am sorry to declare, that he appears not to have been *virtuous*. "Great knowledge of men, and of manners," saith Dean Milles,* necessarily must be ascribed to "the author of *Ælla*:" there is in *Ælla* neither "notation of character, nice delineation of nature, nor situations of strong interest," saith our Enquirer, "but such as a young reader might transplant from a thousand modern tragedies:" and a "thousand" who shall hesitate to declare, that Chatterton had read? Here is at once a large field for accusations of plagiarism; yet no precise imitations of "character, nature, or interest,"

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* Enquiry, page 87.

are adduced to the support of this argument: This general observation of "our Enquirer" claimed thro' his critical sagacity particular remarks from writers of the drama: yet at once * we are assured, the Boy shewed "amazing intuition, not only in books, but he looked on life with a penetrating eye; his knowledge of the world, his attention to character appears in his numerous satirical pieces;"—as little evincing knowledge in the science of man, as judgment in literary pursuits, writings of his undoubted manufacture had been long since buried in oblivion, had not adventitious circumstances of peculiar situation afforded their obliging support. If, on one hand, it be pronounced improbable, that "ROWLEY dressed up *an ancient* tale with a plot, and fictitious characters;" on the other, is it probable, that the same story should be selected "three centuries" after his existence? and this, because "poetry looks back upon ancient manners with delight!" The period, which had passed between the æra, collected for "Ælla, the old champion of Bristol," and that, in which ROWLEY appeared, surely vindicates, without going farther, such alledged "delight of a poetick mind:" a term of "five centuries" is a far longer than even the *Horatian* date, for "ideas of antiquity."

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* Enquiry, page 87.

The "sixth branch of enquiry" is distinguished by "a comparison of Chatterton's Poems with those attributed to ROWLEY." To *remarks* already submitted in the "strictures" on this subject, a single addition will suffice upon *that* adduced by our Enquirer; the inequality of the former, when contrasted with the latter, hath been warmly insisted upon by one party; "the appearance of the same hand in both" is as warmly insisted upon by the other. One solitary instance exhibits itself as a testimony for the sentiments of the latter, a means inadequate to the end proposed: had *more extensive* examples been adduced, the conclusion desired would scarcely have sprung from the premises; that all the pages dispersed through "the miscellanies" passing under the name of "Chatterton," acknowledge him their inventor, it hath not been duly ascertained. "A year and an half" we may recollect the limitation for the first attempt, and final completion of the Poems, ascribed to ROWLEY;" a limitation to the workings of a youth, in whose imagination, *if* arrayed in the most lavish blossoms, scarce a germinating bud of "judicious arrangement" has peeped forth, yet these Poems display in various portions the beauties of a full blown spring. A fair, and unaverted insight into the genuine exertions of human nature, will not wantonly endure a violation of her laws by the prepossessions of credulity, and the prejudices of system. "Comparative" passages of an author may
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be brought from his "best, worst, or indifferent" performances; they will be, however, weakly argued, where coincidence of opinion is expected by a deviation from ideas, *determined* in the nature of things: such multifarious eccentricity of devotion to the quill, when an author is reduced to a term of life so scanty, leads unbiassed minds to the persuasion, that a whim and frolic of nature has been transfused into the *critick's* brain. The goddess, who sallied "en guerriere, and armed cap-a-pee from the noddle of Jove," is not worthy to be feigned with the *real* exhibitor of *Bristol* intellect, vibrating the harp of Apollo to the voice of every mule "in the eighteenth century. *

"Miscellaneous observations" furnish the "seventh portion" of our Enquirer's reasoning; the Bristol Boy is concerned in their effect, as to the following instance alone: "William the Conqueror is poetically enough described chasing the stag:" here "Chatterton was in his walk of ancient English history."

* With respect to many of the Poems in this Rowleian business, the advocates of the Priest have placed too much to ideas of excellence, those of the Boy, too much, and too little. Where is the epick bard, who hath never been reproached for instances of false taste, and of the bloated sublime? Absurdities in Chatterton's miscellanies may be best "defended" by those who rejoice to wade in the profundity of error: the faults, honestly attributeable to the "author of the Rowleian miscellany," may not be so ingloriously estimated.

history." Must the Poem of "the Tournament" be on this account adjudged to the Bristol Boy? has no prior authority been capable of traversing this walk? What ancient history is evinced, however, by the conduct of this Poem? that William (which of the two Normans it is not positively maintained) "was fond of hunting." A knowledge of this *extraordinary* circumstance subsisting in *extraordinary* times of such royal indulgence, may not be pretended a limitation to the sagacity of the eighteenth century! "We have in another piece an allegorical description of Battayle subdued by Pleasure; in this Chatterton's knowledge of modern imagery appears." I trow *not*; a poet existing in the age of Spencer was adequately qualified to a personification of the passions, and of their consequences; the pencil of allegory hath not been so competently employed in recent periods.

Our Enquirer closes with "the character and circumstances of Chatterton." Why is the Ghost of Shakespeare, or rather his Spirit immortal, conjured up on the occasion? To his "Warwickshire deer-stealer-ship" we may demur; that he was "idle" his compositions confute; that he was "illiterate" his "having small Latin, and no Greek," will by no means attest; that he "aimed at filching" reputation by crooked practices of impudent imposture, he possessed a spirit too great for
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a surmise: Shakespeare was no boy when he composed "Othello."* The Bristol ambitious, set down by the authority of his parent for a perfect dunce, appears pregnant, in a twinkling, with exceeding humor, and riveted to solemnity at the age of twelve years; on a subject indeed, which requires great seriousness of reflection. Chatterton's sister is referred to upon the occasion, but she intimates no syllable of the "apostate Will, possessed," saith our Enquirer, "of a degree of humor, and an ease in versification *astonishing in such a child*:"† but what connection of any specimens, which marked the undisputed originality of Chatterton, with his engagements in the compositions under the name of ROWLEY? His mother satisfies herself with the cool assertion, that before he quitted school, he grew fond of reading:" her evidence intimates not a tittle of his performances, though she had herself instructed him in his letters not many years before: He left school at the age of fourteen years, and upwards. The declaration of Lord Oxford's dancing master, that "his Lordship was the greatest dunce at a minuet" introduces another, which many masters of the political dance will not scruple to assert, that he was as considerable a dunce in the *figure* of Administration.

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* Enquiry, p. 103.

† Enquiry, p. 104.

Presumptive testimony is liberally submitted in construction of Chatterton's abilities: that he was of a gloomy character hath been urged by opponents to his disadvantage; by advocates in his favor: stupidity is alledged against him by the first, "his secret solicitation of the muse" by the last.

"Some deem'd him wonderous wise, and
some be liev'd him mad."

His character for veracity hath been asserted by the *troubled* affection of a sister, and ecchoed by one advocate; the same veracity hath been imputed to his pride by another. To "the searcher of hearts" must be resigned a decision of inward thoughts; his creature man most consistently exercises his reason by collecting disposition from conduct; yet he, who hath injured his earlier days to falsehood, may not be supposed but from maturity of years capable to shake off the habitual blemish.

"Mr. Walpole never saw Chatterton," yet talks with perfect complacency in favor of the *problamatical*, the paradoxal faculties of his incognito; possessed of this determined good opinion of an humble parish boy, a *little* mind alone would, I am afraid, have been provoked by "peevish answerers" to withhold that patronage, and protection, which few were better able than Mr. Walpole to supply. "His miserable end?" good God! why *flew* not Mr. Walpole to procure him

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a reputable beginning? rescuing him from a tract of hypocrisy, which may not long subsist in a world of intelligence; and is at best the "burial place" for every quality, an ornament to social intercourse.

What Chatterton's mother calls "his growing fond of reading" is at once expressed to "his devotion for study:"* but "quick through the key-hole pops a sprite!" Chatterton "*had access* to the library at Bristol." Here his sister's letter (and she *in course* kept poetick vigils with her brother!) is introduced to prove, that "he set up all night while clerk to Mr. Lambert:" the case of many a foppish clerk to an attorney, tho', it must be confessed, upon a pretence widely different! "blank + slips of refuse or neglected parchments," may not ascertain the "penury of parchment in the days of Edward IV," yet as familiarly as the use of *shreds* is obtained by a gardener from the sweepings of a "bow legged artificer's manufactory, *shreds of parchment* are dexterously conjured up for an argument in support of Chatterton's "Rowlieshyppes." I have some faint recollection (upon this subject) of a *fool's-cap parchment*, of which Mr. Ruddall's testimony instructs me to credit the existence.

Mr. Herbert Croft junior, attentive to the calls of a laborious profession, displays a talent of enquiry into the *business* of poetry: this

* Enquiry, page 110. † Ibid, page 112.

this author of "love and madness" is a strenuous zealot for the *rights* of our Bristol Urchin. To the *inconclusive* evidence of Mr. Ruddall, already delivered, some considerations are submitted in addition by the favor of the above professional gentleman: a subsidiary occupation which will not confirm much. "Ten pounds," honestly alledged before by Mr. Ruddall to have been a compensation for "the discovery of a fact, hitherto lodged within his own bosom," were forwarded from the pocket of our Councillor to the family of Bristol, through the kind interposition of Mr. Ruddall. Our Councillor esteemed Chatterton's claim to the Poems well founded; so did Mr. Walpole; he appears, however, to have done more than Mr. Walpole; he covertly gave money for information upon the matter; the money was faithfully bestowed, where a larger sum might have been consistently indulged—upon "a family in distress." In one material circumstance alone our Councillor's evidence is enlarged from that of the Pamphleteer, who gives rise to the "Strictures:" the *former* asserts "Mr. Ruddall to have confessed, unless *his* memory *failed him*," *fails him, and bath failed him* "ever since the day" on which the evidence was communicated, that "he assisted Chatterton in disguising *several* pieces of parchment with the appearance of age, before the account of the Old Bridge appeared in Farley's Journal: this bridge has

the formidable cast to myself, I freely confess, of a "pons asinorum," which I am not sufficient Euclidian to pass. The above addition contains, with respect to Chatterton's authorship of "the Poems attributed to ROWLEY," no direct allegation; for why should not this treachery of parchment be concluded, (an opinion, which our Councillor's own manner of introducing it sufficiently authorizes) to the affair of the "bridge account," and to no other composition whatsoever? but "I will not affront the common sense of my readers, by making farther remarks upon a tale, which speaks for itself!" *

* Enquiry towards the end.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I HAVE laughed with the Writer of the Archæological Epistle, and find his innocent Conceits pleasant to Conception, though little reconciling the smallest Change in my Principles, relative to Chatterton's Authorship. I with a Smile employed to most Purposes, rather than to that of Degradation, where literary Abilities are immediately interested: With political Considerations, I profess myself not to interfere in the present Point.

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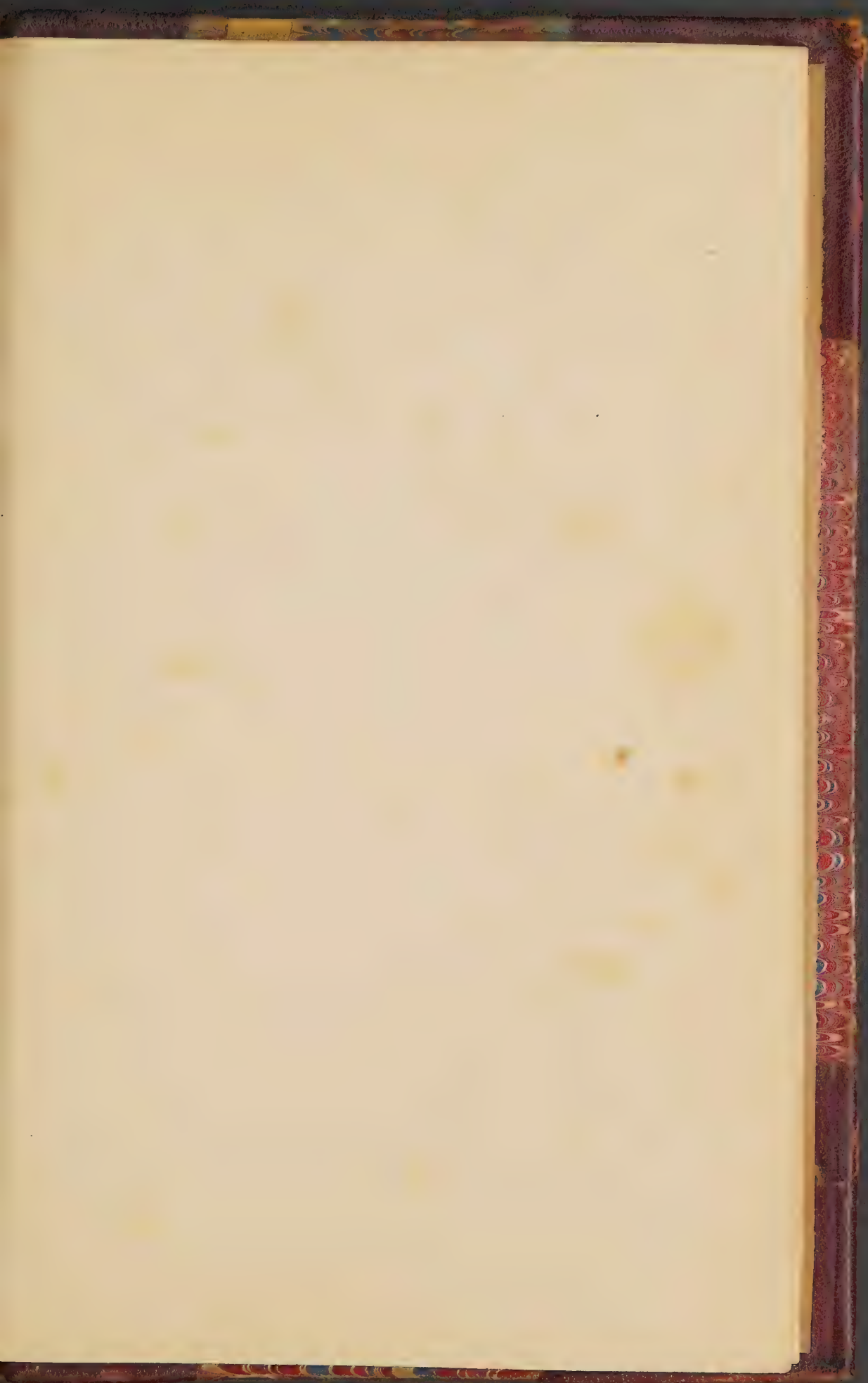
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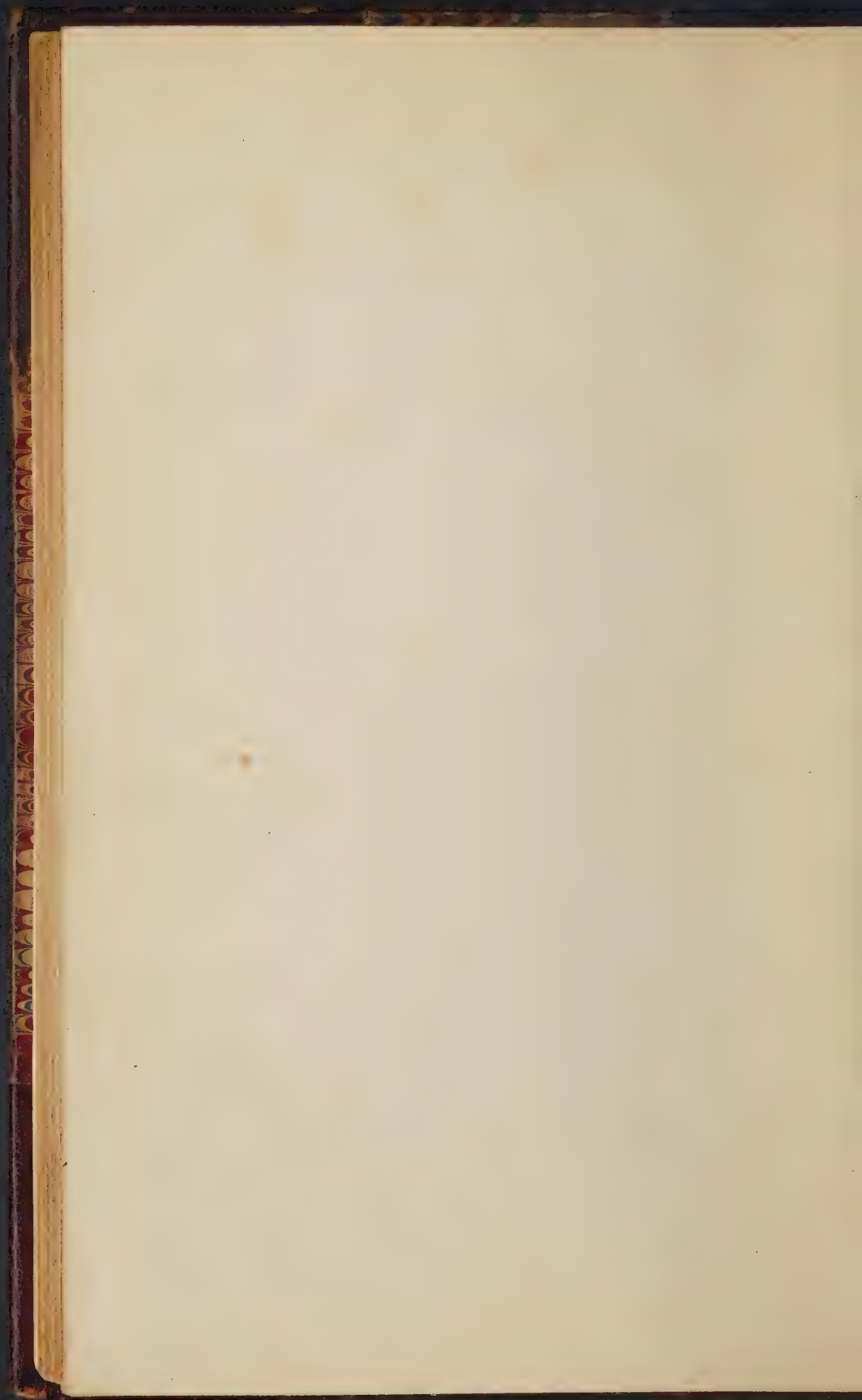
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Stepede in nature's dewe han rered hys name,
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Thanne to the hygh renome of Anna's daies
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Syke bismarelie anoyethe BRUNSWYCKE's praise;
Teachen mie mynde, ne frende of foule despyghte,
To yeven glorie dygne, ne blason guyle;
Ne ROWLIE's shadowe dyghte wythe favoure's
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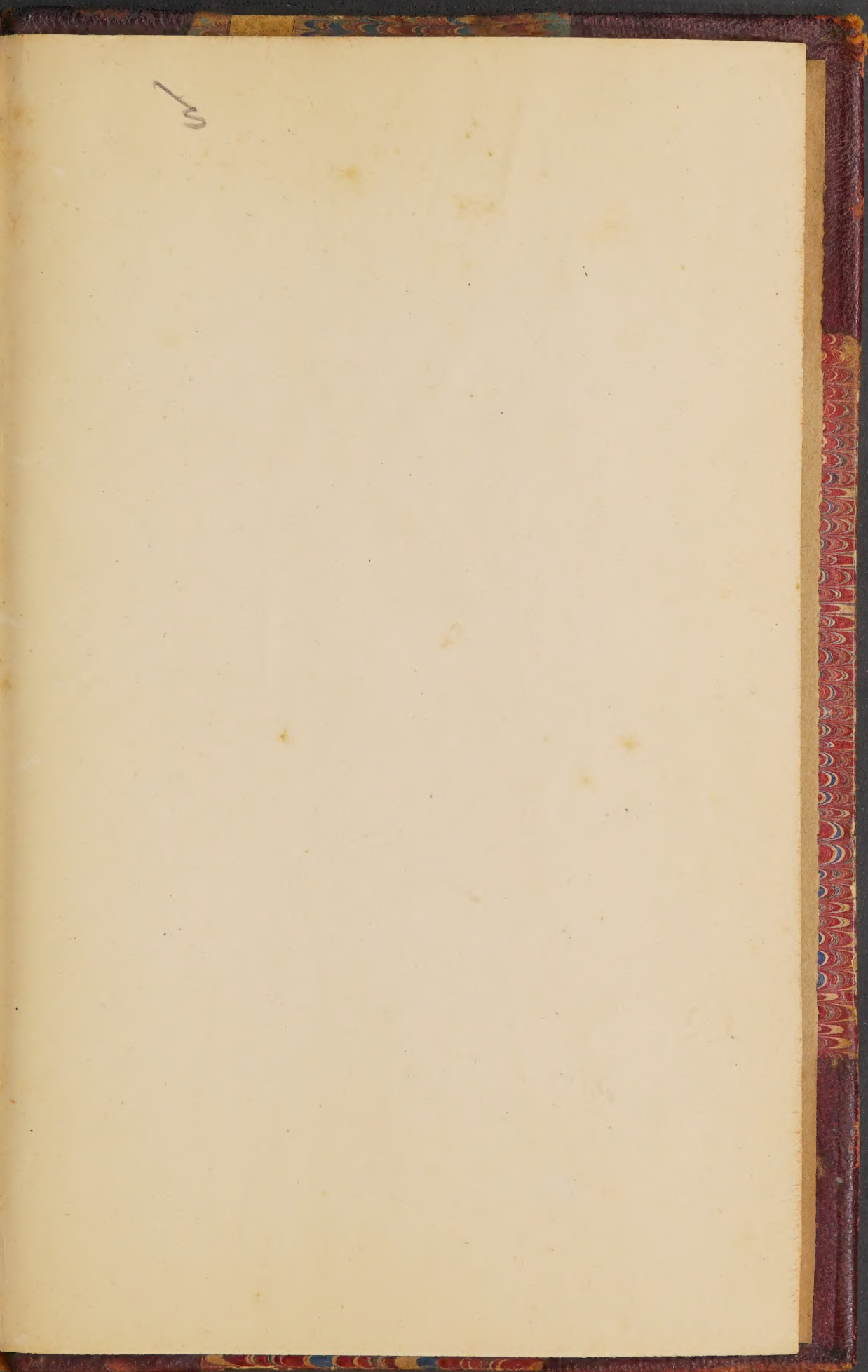
Edward Burnaby Greene.

Kensington, March 12, 1782.









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